

**CHRISTOPHER WALTER**

**THE ICONOGRAPHY OF CONSTANTINE THE GREAT  
EMPEROR AND SAINT**

**With Associated Studies**



**ALEXANDROS PRESS**

**CHRISTOPHER WALTER**

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THE GREAT, EMPEROR AND SAINT**

**WITH ASSOCIATED STUDIES**

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## PREFACE

Byzantine art and culture interested me long before I went to Paris to prepare my doctoral dissertation under the direction of Professor André Grabar. From him I acquired a methodological approach, which I have continued to use up to this day. Starting from the pictures, I have sought to establish their iconography and significance by referring to earlier pictures which the artists could have used as models and the texts which could have inspired them. The interested person can find a comprehensive list of my publications in *Ritual and Art. Byzantine Essays for Christopher Walter*, edited by Pamela Armstrong, London 2006, p. 275-285. I do not reproduce it here.

One point which I particularly wish to make in this preface is that, in the course of my studies, I have become increasingly aware that Byzantine art and culture has a specific "spirit", of which I have always tried to grasp the importance and significance for the Byzantines themselves. Although specialists in Byzantine art have sometimes tended erroneously to regard it as a sub-species of Renaissance art, applying to it the kind of methods appropriate to the latter, I am by no means the only scholar to prefer another approach. A recent example is Glenn Peers, whose erudite study *Sacred Shock. Framing Visual Experience in Byzantium*, The Pennsylvania State University 2004, sets out to discover the means by which the Byzantines made manifest the relationship between the divine and the human thought crafted, material objects. It enters profoundly into the fact, so often bewildering for Western viewer, that for the Byzantines icons were a means of access to the divine rather than essays in aesthetics.

Latterly I observed in the epilogue to *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition*, London 2003, that regrettably for various reasons many aspects of the subject had either been treated summarily or set aside. In the present book I attempt to make up partially for some of these deficiencies.

Constantine, whose iconography is the subject of the first part of this book, cannot complain of neglect. Recently he has received assiduous attention as a warrior and statesman, possibly because 2003 was the 1700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his accession to power and coronation in York. However, another aspect of Constantine has received less attention. This is the growth of devotion to him as a saint, particularly after the Triumph of Orthodoxy. The Byzantines then increasingly regarded the Invention of the Cross by Constantine and his mother

Helena as their supreme achievement. This may be clearly observed in their iconography, particularly in church decorative programmes and on sumptuary objects.

The second part, the collected articles, is devoted mainly to a more detailed and accurate study of themes which had previously received more cursory treatment. The *maniakion* or torc, known principally as an attribute of Saint Sergius and Saint Bacchus, had, in fact, a far wider importance, as I show in the first article. A second article deals with acronyms, particularly those associated with the Cross. A third is the straightforward exegesis of a "message" constructed from acronyms, rudimentary sketches of saints and cryptograms.

The three concluding articles are concerned with the so called *kephalophoros* saints. They are grouped under the general title of *Severed Heads and Heads as Trophies*. The introduction, a developed version of a hitherto unpublished lecture given at the British School of Archaeology in Athens over a decade ago, presents summarily the place of the severed head in Antique and Western Medieval art. Three warrior saints who were represented *kephalophoros* are then treated. Saint George comes first. The distinguishing mark of a *kephalophoros* saint is the fact that he normally has *two* heads, one on his shoulders and the other held in his hands which is offered as a sign of triumph to Christ. Here all the examples known to me of Saint George *kephalophoros* are presented. Saint Zosimos, who follows, is only known to me in one example. Finally Saint Vladimir, for various reasons, is a special case. In the post-Byzantine period, this Medieval ruler of Diocleia received cult, thanks to Greeks who had emigrated there from Cyprus. His iconography, cult and influence have particularities which are expounded here.

Perhaps the most important role of a preface is to allow the author to express his heartfelt thanks to the numerous colleagues who have not just helped him but also made his research possible. They are too many to be listed here in their entirety. However, it is imperative that some should be named. Father Joseph Munitiz, S.J., was helpful with texts. The chapter on Constantine in Cappadocia was made possible thanks to the photographs and counsels of Nicole Thierry and Catherine Jolivet-Lévy. The chapter on Cretan painting derives from the pioneer work of Maria Vasilakis-Mavrakakis. Further help with Cretan painting came from Ioannis Spatharakis of Alexandros Press, which is publishing this book.

I can only hope that those who read this book will receive as much reward as I did from writing it.

## I. THE ICONOGRAPHY OF CONSTANTINE THE GREAT, EMPEROR AND SAINT

## INTRODUCTION

That Constantine I was one of the greatest figures in European history can surely not be open to doubt. Already in his lifetime accounts of him were written. Both Lactantius and Eusebius of Caesarea wrote eulogies of him. He also figures in the Latin Panegyrics. Later legendary accounts of him were composed, in both East and West. Recent scholars have studied him assiduously. However they have only sporadically shown interest in his iconography. The present study attempts to repair this omission. It sets out to provide a global study of his iconography from its beginnings in Antiquity, through the Byzantine and on into the post-Byzantine epoch, with particular reference to its significance as an expression of his cult.

The method and the general lines are the same as those of my earlier treatises on iconography, notably of ecclesiastical councils,<sup>1</sup> of the Byzantine episcopate,<sup>2</sup> and latterly of the Byzantine warrior saints,<sup>3</sup> as well as in my volumes of collected studies.<sup>4</sup> It might be thought that Constantine was adequately treated by André Grabar in his study of the Byzantine emperor in Byzantine art.<sup>5</sup> However, although it would not be exaggerating to designate this study as my primary manual of iconography, it is too wide in its scope to present in adequate detail the first Byzantine emperor.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. Walter, *L'iconographie des conciles dans la tradition byzantine*, Paris 1970.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, *Art and Ritual of the Byzantine Church*, London 1982.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition*, London 2003.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem*, *Studies in Byzantine Iconography*, London 1977; *Prayer and Power in Byzantine and Papal Imagery*, Aldershot 1993; *Pictures as Language. How the Byzantines Exploited Them*, London 2000.

<sup>5</sup> A. Grabar, *L'empereur dans l'art byzantin*, Strasbourg 1936; reprinted Variorum London 1971.

Besides analysing and publishing the literary sources, scholars have studied Constantine in a variety of ways, notably theological, historical and sociological. I have had recourse to such studies in order to interpret his iconography. It would have been tedious and arid to have limited my research to the discernment in iconography of uses and structures analogous to those of language. A satisfactory consideration of iconographical signs must take into account the fact that they may be polysemic or have several connotations. In order to explain each aspect of them, it was necessary to have recourse to the results of research in the above mentioned disciplines as I did in my earlier studies of other subjects.

My approach in these studies was similar but not standardised. Each subject has its specificity, calling for particular attention. Councils, bishops and warriors were represented pictorially only several centuries after their occurrence or lifetime. The specificity of the iconography of Constantine, which distinguishes it from that of the other themes which I have studied, derives firstly from his awareness that he belonged to the series of pagan emperors which preceded him beginning with Augustus or even Alexander the Great, and secondly to the fact that he was represented frequently during his lifetime. Consequently his portrayal on his Arch in Rome, as well as on coins, sumptuary objects and statues, must be examined before turning to his more conventionally 'Byzantine' iconography particularly as it was developed in the period which succeeded the Triumph of Orthodoxy.

## THE LIFE OF CONSTANTINE

A concomitant obligation is to seek for insight into Constantine's character, since this in part determined the way in which he was represented.<sup>1</sup> The principal source for this insight is undoubtedly the *Life* written by Eusebius. Since his mother Helena played an important part in his activities, the obvious starting point is his birth in Niš (Naïssus) in 272/3.<sup>2</sup> Helena was, it seems a casual acquaintance of Constantine's father Constantius Chlorus. Her social origins are not certain. Ambrose of Milan called her a *stabularia*<sup>3</sup> (an innkeeper surely, not a barmaid), whom Constantius met in Drepanum near Nicomedia. Constantine renamed the town Helenopolis after his mother.<sup>4</sup> Helena's civil status is also uncertain. Constantius set her aside, in order to marry Theodora, daughter of Maximian; by whom he had several sons. Nevertheless he established her honourably in Trier, the capital of the prefecture of the Gauls of which he was governor. Moreover he gave precedence to his son by her, Constantine, over his sons by his second consort, making him his official heir.

Constantine spent his youth, at least from about the age of twenty, serving in the East. In 305, he decided, or was summoned, to visit his

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, edited by Averil Cameron and Stuart G. Hall, Oxford 1999, III 43.4-47.3, p. 138-139; editors' commentary, p. 294-295. The editors depend largely on Timothy B. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, Cambridge, Mass. 1981, and *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine*, Cambridge, Mass. 1982. *Vid.* also A. Piganiol, *L'empereur Constantin*, (second edition), Paris 1977.

<sup>2</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, introduction, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> Ambrose of Milan; *De obitu Theodosii*, 41-48, CSEL, LXXIII, p. 393-396; Giorgio Bonamente, "Sull'ortodossia di Costantino. Gli *Actus Sylvestri* dall'invenzione all'autenticazione", *Byzantinistica. Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Slavi*, Serie II, 6, 2004, p. 9; Agostino Amore, "Elena", *Bibliotheca sanctorum* 4, 988.

<sup>4</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, IV 61; Cameron and Hall, p. 177; commentary, p. 340.



father who was then residing in York. It is hardly likely that he did not visit his mother in Trier en route for York although there is no reference to such a visit in the literary sources. His arrival was timely, because his father died the following year. He must have already acquired a considerable reputation, both civil and military, since he was immediately acclaimed Augustus by the troops, with, apparently, no opposition from his father's other sons.

Constantine set off with his troops for his 'capital' Trier. In 310, he learnt that Maximian had usurped the prefecture of the Gauls. He fought him at Massilia (Marseilles) and defeated him. Maximian then committed suicide. On his way to Massilia, Constantine had what may be called for convenience a vision at a place called Grand, where there was an important sanctuary dedicated to Apollo, a god venerated by the Gauls.<sup>5</sup> The whereabouts of Grand and the authenticity of Constantine's vision are both controversial. The only source for the vision is a passage in a discourse delivered in 310 and recorded in the *Panegyrici latini* VI.<sup>6</sup> "Fortune herself thus arranged it that the successful outcome of your affairs advised you to offer to the immortal gods what you had vowed, in the place where you had turned aside to the most beautiful temple in the whole world, or rather to the god manifested in your person. You saw, I believe, Constantine, your Apollo, accompanied by Victoria."

Constantine, in fact, assimilated Apollo to the *Sol Invictus*, the Unconquered Sun, to whom his father Constantius had offered cult. Whether or not the vision at Grand actually occurred, the text describing it is highly important, because it is the earliest documented account of Constantine's own devotion to the Unconquered Sun. This devotion undoubtedly exercised an important influence, at least during the first decade of his reign, upon Constantine's conception of the imperial office to which he had succeeded. The influence of the iconography of the Unconquered Sun on Constantine's own will be discussed in due course.

<sup>5</sup> J.-J. Hatt, "La vision de Constantin au sanctuaire de Grand et l'origine celtique du *labarum*", *Latomus* 9, 1950, p. 427-436; R. MacMullen, "Constantine and the Miraculous", *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 9, 1968, p. 81-96; Barbara Saylor Rodgers, "Constantine's Pagan Vision", *Byzantion* 50, 1980, p. 259-278. Rodgers cites the relevant passage, *art. cit.*, p. 270.

Other revelations, visions and locutions, according to Eusebius, frequently recurred throughout Constantine's life. God revealed to him by supernatural signs among other things plots which were organised against him.<sup>7</sup> For Christian writers, the outstanding supernatural intervention, which later assumed importance in his iconography, was the vision about the time of the midday sun of a cross-shaped trophy formed from light and resting over the sun with a text attached to it "By this conquer". This was seen, according to the sources, not only by the emperor himself but also by the whole contingent of soldiers accompanying him.<sup>8</sup> Christ then appeared to Constantine alone in a dream, displaying the sign and urging him to use it as protection against his enemies.<sup>9</sup>

The account of this vision and locution differs in a number of details in the *Life* by Eusebius<sup>10</sup> and in the treatise by Lactantius, *De moribus persecutorum*.<sup>11</sup> The most important difference is the date at which it occurred. Eusebius does not connect it with the Battle of the Milvian Bridge but places it much earlier. Lactantius places it on the eve of the battle. Despite what was believed later, it is highly improbable that the Cross was marked on the soldiers' shields, so assuring that the Battle of the Milvian Bridge culminated in a decisive victory over Maxentius. It is more likely that the soldiers' shields were marked with the *labarum*.<sup>12</sup> At this time, Constantine's patronal deity was certainly the Unconquered

<sup>7</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, I 47, p. 88-89; commentary, p. 222-223.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, I 28, p. 81; commentary, p. 206-207.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, I 29, p. 81; commentary, p. 208-209.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*. Eusebius places the vision and locution earlier, before Constantine's campaign against Maxentius began.

<sup>11</sup> *De la mort des persécuteurs*, edited J. Moreau, Paris 1954, text, XLIV-XLV, p. 127-128; commentary, p. 430-437. For Constantine's "vision", without calling in question its supernatural import, Peter Weiss, "The Vision of Constantine", *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 6, 2003, p. 237-259, adduces a number of similar phenomena which have been studied scientifically.

<sup>12</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, I 39-41, p. 85-86; commentary, p. 216-218. Hatt, *La vision de Constantin*.

Sun, whose place in the decorative programme of the celebrated Arch is well described by Philip Peirce.<sup>13</sup>

Possibly it was even more difficult for Constantine than it is now in retrospect for us to comprehend the notions current in his lifetime of the influence of supernatural and preternatural powers on human life.<sup>14</sup> Constantine entered into an established heritage of such notions. Preternatural influences could provoke diseases, against which apotropaic magic, notably the use of amulets, was practised by pagans and Christians alike. Divine powers controlled the winds, but these could be manipulated. For example Constantine is said to have had a 'wise man' called Sopater put to death for causing the winds to be changed so preventing the grain fleets from reaching Rome.<sup>15</sup> Demons, the emissaries of higher supernatural powers, could be either good or evil.<sup>16</sup> (Christians tended to call good demons angels.) They inspired religious controversies and worked continuously "against progress of unity in the Church by spreading false doctrines, libels (and) suspicions against Christians." Mac Mullen supposes that Constantine, as much as his contemporaries, feared antagonistic wizardry and put his faith in supernatural aid.<sup>17</sup> Elsner calls attention to the continuity between Antiquity and Christianity in people's response to ritual-centred images.<sup>18</sup>

Constantine's personal attitude to the supernatural and the preternatural at the time of his conquest of Rome – and probably throughout his life – tended to be pragmatic. If he was certainly a devotee of the Unconquered Sun when he commissioned the decoration of his Arch, he did not exclude the possibility that other supernatural entities

<sup>13</sup> Philip Peirce, "The Arch of Constantine: Propaganda and Ideology in Late Roman Art", *Art History* 12.4, December 1989, p. 407–409. *Vid. infra* for an account of the iconography. Andreae, B. *Römische Kunst*, Freiburg, Basel, Wien, 1982, figs. 617–629.

<sup>14</sup> R. MacMullen, "Constantine and the Miraculous", *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 9, 1968, p. 96; J. Elsner, "Image and Ritual: Reflections on the Religious Appropriation of Classical Art", *Classical Quarterly* 46 (ii), 1996, p. 515–531.

<sup>15</sup> MacMullen, *art. cit.*, p. 90.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 93, note 42, with a lengthy bibliography on demons.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 96.

<sup>18</sup> Elsner, "Image and Ritual", p. 531.

should intervene on his behalf. Hence the notorious ambiguity of its dedicatory inscription that "whatsoever is divine in heaven may intervene favourably on my behalf". However, subsequent accounts which attribute his victory at the Milvian Bridge to his conversion to Christianity, are surely apocryphal. Of course, it was hardly possible to spend time in Rome, where the pope was a public figure, without becoming cognisant of Christianity. Constantine sensibly employed members of the Christian clergy to instruct him in its tenets.<sup>19</sup> However, the Western tradition that Constantine was actually baptised by a pope (Sylvester, pontificate 314–335, or even Eusebius; pontificate 309) was usually discounted in the East.<sup>20</sup> His readiness to tolerate Christianity may have been facilitated by the fact that the Unconquered Sun had points of resemblance with Jesus, the Christians' incarnate God. These will be considered later in the section on iconography. Although Constantine may not have been personally aware of this, the sun plays an important part in Biblical texts. In the Old Testament, *Malachias* 4.2 attributes to the Lord the prophecy that "the sun of justice will arise". In the *Apocalypse* the sun is mentioned eight times, while in the account of the Transfiguration (*Matthew* 17.2) Christ's face is said to shine like the sun and in the account of Saint Paul's conversion (*Acts* 9.3; compare 26.12) it is said that a light more brilliant than the sun shines in the sky.

In 312 Constantine commissioned no specifically Christian monument in Rome. The situation was rather different in 315 when he celebrated his Decennalia in the city and the Arch was officially dedicated (Figs. 167–168). Galerius had died in Thessaloniki in 311, while Maxentius was drowned in the Tiber during the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312, so leaving Constantine as the sole emperor in the West. Licinius, who defeated Maximinus Daia in 313, equally became the sole emperor in the East. When he met Constantine in Milan, they promulgated jointly the Edict of Milan, in which the terms *divinus fervor* and the *summa divinitas* were used. Although they were both in agreement that the cult of the

<sup>19</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, I.42, p. 86, commentary, p. 220.

<sup>20</sup> Garth Fowden, "The Last Days of Constantine: Oppositional Versions and Their Influence", *The Journal of Roman Studies* LXXIV, 1994, p. 153–165.

Christian God should be tolerated, this by no means implied that they personally accepted the tenets of Christianity. They only affirmed that they both accepted the existence of a Supreme Being which would help god-fearing rulers to victory. In 315, when his Arch in Rome, with its bas-reliefs figuring the Unconquered Sun, was dedicated, Constantine could afford, as it were, to back his horses both ways. He countenanced the erection of a colossal statue of himself holding in his hand a tall pole in the shape of a cross.<sup>21</sup>

Relations between Constantine and Licinius were far from being consistently cordial. In fact, although Constantine was obliged to undertake a campaign against the Sarmatians in 323, his main preoccupation during the decade after the Edict of Milan was to reduce the influence of and ultimately eliminate Licinius who was killed with his son in 324.<sup>22</sup> Meanwhile, Constantine had been progressively replacing official cult of the Unconquered Sun by that of the Christian God. He hoped, forlornly as things turned out, that the Church as an institution would give structural unity to his inchoate empire. Constantine, naturally, held fast to his conception of himself as the terrestrial delegate of the Supreme Power, even if he did not equate it exactly with the Christian God. Thus he did not have pagan temples demolished systematically as would Theodosius I later. He had statues brought from sanctuaries in the provinces to decorate Constantinople, his new capital which was dedicated in his presence in 330.<sup>23</sup> Many of these statues were actually placed inside the church of Saint Sophia. He strongly discouraged any attempt to treat him as a divinity;<sup>24</sup> for example, he would not allow his statue to be placed in an alcove as in an idol-shrine.<sup>25</sup> He regarded himself simply as God's representative on earth or as the Thirteenth Apostle. Hence his wish to be buried at the luxuriously decorated sanctuary which he had built in their honour.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, I 40, p. 85.

<sup>22</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, I 49-II 19; commentary, p. 224-237.

<sup>23</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, III 54-58, p. 142-147; commentary, p. 301-305.

<sup>24</sup> He was nevertheless called *divus* and likened to Christ, *ibidem*, IV 68-73; commentary, p. 344-350.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, IV 15, p. 159; commentary, p. 316.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, IV 58-60, p. 176-177; commentary, p. 337-339, 344.

He certainly invested large sums of money in building churches, not only in Rome, like St Peter's built between 320 and 327, but also in the Holy Land, where the church of the Holy Sepulchre was dedicated in 335. His mother Helena, who was declared Augusta in 324, was actively engaged during her last years in the Holy Land. She died in 328/330 and was buried in Rome. Eusebius says nothing about her finding the True Cross. This story was almost certainly apocryphal, although it circulated and was universally believed perhaps as early as 350.<sup>27</sup> Its importance for the present study is that it associated Helena with the Cross, providing a link with her son Constantine and his vision. This was the basis for the most widespread of Constantine's iconographical themes.

Another action of Constantine's which would receive great importance in his iconography was his convocation of the First Council of Nicaea in 325.<sup>28</sup> This major event in the history of the Church, remembered particularly for its definition of Christ's divine sonship and its condemnation of Arius, is little documented outside the *Life* of Eusebius. Constantine styled himself 'bishop appointed by God over those outside' (the Church).<sup>29</sup> He was indeed 'outside the Church' himself, because it was believed at Byzantium that he was only baptised at the end of his life in a suburb of Nicomedia,<sup>30</sup> traditionally by Eusebius, the Arian bishop of Nicomedia, later to become bishop of Constantinople. Eusebius the historian did not mention his name.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless Constantine certainly played an active part in the Council, and, in its later iconography, he invariably presides.

His last years were much occupied in settling differences between the numerous tendentious groups within the Christian Church. One of the most important of his interventions in ecclesiastical matters was the

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, commentary, p. 280-281.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, III 4-24, p. 122-131; commentary, p. 256-273.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, IV 24, p. 161; commentary, p. 320. There has been much controversy over the significance of this phrase.

<sup>30</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, IV 61-62; commentary, p. 141-142.

<sup>31</sup> Fowden, *art. cit.*, "The Last Days of Constantine", p. 153; Barry Baldwin and Alice Mary Talbot, "Eusebius of Nikomedia", *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* II, p. 752-753. For the Western tradition that he was baptised by pope Sylvester in Rome, *vid.* G. Bonamente, "Sull'ortodossia di Costantino", *Bizantinistica*, series II, 6, 2004, 1-46.



convocation of the synod of Tyre, which condemned and exiled Athanasius in 335.<sup>32</sup> He died on the Feast of Pentecost, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 337. He received a Christian burial in a mausoleum alongside the sanctuary of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople.<sup>33</sup> Subsequently, the practice of calling him the Thirteenth Apostle, was discouraged. The citizens of Rome, who had expected that he would be buried there, apotheosised him and called him *divus*.<sup>34</sup> His apotheosis would be represented on coins.<sup>35</sup>

## THE ART OF CONSTANTINE'S REIGN

Constantine's personal interest in art has already been adumbrated.<sup>1</sup> Although the vast majority of the works with which he was associated no longer exist, enough of them are known to make it clear that he appreciated art aesthetically as well as exploiting it politically. He was neither the first nor the last emperor to rifle *spolia*, notably bas-reliefs for his Arch and statues to adorn the city of Constantinople. His Arch has survived in remarkably good condition, but for the most part we still possess from his time only small luxury objects and coins with varying imprints.

Constantine, in fact, had many statues made of him, particularly later in Constantinople. However, no colossal statue of him, like that of an unidentified emperor erected at Barletta,<sup>2</sup> has survived nor even a representation of one. The nearest parallel occurs in the *Tabula Peutingeriana* in the Austrian National Library, Vienna. Three personifications of cities are represented. That of Constantinople extends

<sup>1</sup> No monograph exists which treats this subject specifically. However, Jas Elsner, *Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph*, Oxford 1998, presents the background admirably. Catalogues of major exhibitions are useful, not only for their text but also for their reproductions. The best is probably *Age of Spirituality. Late Antique and Early Christian Art, Third to Seventh Century*, edited by Kurt Weitzmann (Metropolitan Museum), New York 1978, especially the contributions by James D. Breckenridge, p. 3-5, 15-21; by Richard Brilliant, p. 60-69; by Alfred Frazer, p. 109-122. *Vid.* also Constantine *sub indice*, *Byzance. L'art byzantin dans les collections publiques françaises*, edited by Jannic Durand (Louvre), Paris 1992, includes important contributions by Jean-Michel Spieser, p. 24-25 and by Cécile Morrisson, p. 158-163. *Byzantium. Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture* edited by David Buckton (British Museum), London 1994, p. 25-29, is also useful. Most recently, *Age of Constantine*, edited by Noel Lenski, Cambridge 2006; *Constantine the Great. York's Roman Emperor*, edited by Elizabeth Hartley, etc., London 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Elsner, *Imperial Rome*, figure 48, p. 77.

<sup>32</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, IV 41-42, p. 168-170; commentary, p. 328-330.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, IV 70, p. 181; commentary, p. 347.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, IV 69, 73, p. 180, 182; commentary, p. 345-346, 350.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, commentary, p. 346, figure 11b (Byzantine collection, *Dumbarton Oaks*); G. Bonamente, "Apotheosi e imperatori cristiani", *I cristiani e l'impero nel IV secolo*, edited by G. Bonamente and A. Nestori, Macerata 1988, p. 107-142.



her right hand towards a figure standing on a column (Fig. 155). The figure, holding a globe in the right hand and a spear in the left, is evidently Constantine.<sup>3</sup> There is nothing Christian about this figure, unlike the one which Constantine had erected in Rome.

However, portraits of Constantine in bust form, mostly in profile, are far more numerous. They have been studied assiduously.<sup>4</sup> In spite of considerable variety over the years in style, Constantine's essential features may be readily established on the basis of his portraits on the coinage: fleshy-cheeked, heavy-jowled with a hawk-nose of a distinctive shape, and projecting ears. A portrait of a young Constantine can be seen on a *nummus* in the British Museum, London, struck in Trier in 307, when he was still a Caesar<sup>5</sup> (Fig. 1). He wears a laurel wreath and cuirass. The inscription reads, FL(avius) VAL(erius) CONSTANTINUS NOB(ilissimus) C(aesar). The projecting ears of Constantine can be clearly seen on one of the few frontal effigies of the emperor on coins, a *solidus* in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford<sup>6</sup> (Figs. 2-3). It was struck in Ticinum (Pavia) in 316. The emperor wears a military dress, has no diadem but a nimbus, which is a rare, but not unique, iconographic feature for this period.<sup>7</sup> It is a Sun rather than a Christian attribute. The reverse depicts four small boys, three naked and one clothed, holding the attributes of the four seasons. The inscription reads, FELICIA TEMPORA, the 'happy times' which Constantine provided to his people. The letter T in the exergue denotes that the coin was struck in Ticinum,

<sup>3</sup> Gilbert Dagron, *Naissance d'une capitale*, Paris 1974, plate IV. Dagron cites, p. 66, note 3, *Itineraria romana*, edited by K. Miller, Stuttgart 1916, re-edited, *Die Peutingeriana Tafel*, Stuttgart 1962. *Vid.* also A. and M. Levi, *Itineraria picta, Contributo alla Storia della Tabula Peutingeriana*, Rome 1967, p. 57, note 4, p. 66, 172, 486, note 5, plate 4. They consider that it follows a IIIrd century model, modified about 400. A virtually identical statue of Trajan appears on a gold coin struck in Rome (114-116), now in the British Museum, Elsner, *Imperial Rome*, p. 72, figure 40.

<sup>4</sup> Evelyn Harrison, "The Constantinian Portrait", *DOP* 21, 1967, p. 64; David H. Wright, "The True Face of Constantine the Great", *DOP* 41, 1987, p. 493-507.

<sup>5</sup> *Constantine the Great*, p. 143, n° 86.

<sup>6</sup> *Constantine the Great*, p. 144, n° 90.

<sup>7</sup> See the female figures on the ceiling of an *oecus* in Trier, about which more below (Figs. 15-19).

one of the largest *officinae* in the West. On a medallion of two *solidi* in the British Museum, also struck in Ticinum for his *Decennalia* in 315, he is portrayed in military costume with helmet, cuirass and a laurel wreath (Fig. 4). The inscription around his head calls him, IMP(erator) CONSTANTINUS MAX(imus) P(ius) F(elix) AUG(ustus). The reverse of this medallion shows the personifications of two victories holding a shield inscribed VOT(is) X over an altar inscribed XX (Fig. 5). The inscription reads VICTORIAE LAETAE AUGG NN (Augustorum nostrorum). The plural *Augustorum* refers to Constantine and Licinius, who met in Milan after the latter had defeated Maximinus Daia in 313. The medallion commemorates the joyful victories of the emperors and records the vows upheld over the past ten years and those offered up to take the emperor to the twentieth anniversary.<sup>8</sup> In exergue, SMT (Sacra Moneta Ticinensis) is written. Approximately ten years later, Constantine, older than fifty years, is shown with a chubby face on a gold coin in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet de Médailles, Paris, issued in Constantinople in 326<sup>9</sup> (Figs. 157-158). He wears a bejewelled diadem and is inscribed CONSTANTINUS MAX(imus) AUG(ustus). The reverse of this coin reveals two putti holding a garland of flowers.<sup>10</sup> The inscription around them, GAUDIUM AUGUSTI NOSTRI, denotes the joy which emanates from the emperor. In the exergue CONS (antinopolis) is written. Noticeably older looks Constantine on a *solidus* in the British Museum, struck in Antioch in 335 A.D. on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of his reign, the *Tricennalia*<sup>11</sup> (Figs. 6-7). This portrait was executed in a similar iconography and style to the previous one, seen in the bejewelled diadem and dress, but Constantine has a little longer hair. His titles in the inscription, CONSTANTINUS MAX(imus) AUG(ustus), are identical. The reverse shows a striding, winged

<sup>8</sup> *Constantine the Great*, p. 144, n° 88. John P.C. Kent, Bernhard Overbeck, Armin U. Stylow, *Die Römische Münze*, Munich 1973, p. 160, pl. 136 figs. 631 V and 631 R. Alföldi, Maria R., *Die Constantinische Goldprägung*, Mainz 1963, p. 43, 85, 140, 210 n° 643, fig. 87.

<sup>9</sup> *Byzance*, n° 107, p. 164-165. Alföldi, *Goldprägung*, p. 133, 168 n° 142, fig. 231.

<sup>10</sup> Putti often appear on coins, sarcophagi and on the painted ceiling of an *oecus* in Trier, as we shall see below (Fig. 15).

<sup>11</sup> *Constantine the Great*, p. 146, n° 94.

personification of victory, holding a trophy and a palm branch. The inscription on this side of the coin reads, VICTORIA CONSTANTINI AUG(usti) VOT(is) XXX, and the mint mark, SMAN (Sacra Moneta Antiochensis).

On some early coins there are traces of a beard that has been excised. In fact, the Constantinian type is beardless. It is considered that Constantine's ultimate model was Augustus, although, towards the end of his reign, he also modelled his style on Alexander the Great, whose diadem and heaven-gazing pose he adopted.<sup>12</sup> Eusebius wrote that Constantine "had his own portrait so depicted on the gold coinage that he appeared to look upwards in the manner of one reaching out to God in prayer. Impressions of this type were circulated throughout the entire Roman world. In the imperial quarters of various cities, in the images erected above the entrances, he was portrayed standing up, looking up to heaven, his hands extended in a posture of prayer."<sup>13</sup> These were, of course, pious gestures endemic in Jewish and Christian practice.<sup>14</sup> The coin already mentioned above with Constantine's apotheosis on the reverse portrays him on the obverse with uplifted eyes.<sup>15</sup> Close to the description of Eusebius is the medallion of one and a half *solidus* in the British Museum, struck in Siscia in 326<sup>16</sup> (Fig. 8). Constantine has a diadem with pearls and jewels in low relief and sparse long hair, like that seen on the contemporary coin from Constantinople, mentioned above (Fig. 157). Not only his eyes, but his entire head is lifted upwards. Other characteristics of this and similar portraits are the fixed, stylised smile and the delineation of the sturdy neck of the emperor. There is no inscription on this and similar coins, but on the reverse GLORIA CONSTANTINI AUG(usti) is written (Fig. 156). Constantine is represented here in military costume, holding a trophy on his left

shoulder and dragging a captive from the hair with his left hand; he tramples on a sitting captive, as he marches forwards. The reverse of this long series of portraits is often decorated with victories; on a few of them Victory is shown sitting and writing the words VOT XX on a shield, which is held by a genius. It denotes that the series was struck on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of Constantine, and helps dating the other coins of this type.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, the diadem, replaces laurel wreath; it appears in this series of coins, first in the form of a band, which, within a year, it seems, was jewelled. It may also be used as a terminus for dating other portraits of Constantine.

With regard to the sculptured portraits of Constantine, the most renowned one is naturally his colossal marble head in the Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome<sup>18</sup> (Figs. 11-12). It is 2.60 m. high and together with the other fragments found in the Basilica of Constantine in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, it has been reconstructed as a sitting statue of the emperor, reaching up to ca 10 m. (Fig. 160). Constantine is shown with his characteristic haircut, large eyes, hawk-nose, rather thin lips and strong chin. Of the various dates ascribed to this head, that of 313, possibly 315 A.D., is more acceptable than that between 324-330; it is closer to the coinage of 315 than to that of 325, the latter showing him with a fatty face (cf. with Figs. 4 and 157). Moreover, no (bejewelled) diadem is visible, neither on the other side of the head (Fig. 161), which one would expect around 325 A.D. It is naturally very probable that this statue was erected after his victory on the Milvian Bridge or for his Decennalia.

The colossal marble head from Rome in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, measuring 95.2 cm., although heavily restored, has been identified as that of Constantine the Great<sup>19</sup> (Fig. 162). The back and the

<sup>12</sup> Wright, *Constantine*, p. 505.

<sup>13</sup> Eusebius, IV 14-16, p. 158-159; commentary, p. 315-316.

<sup>14</sup> Psalm 69.5 "In thy name (I) lift my hands in prayer". Mark 6.41 "He (Christ) looked up to heaven, said the blessing".

<sup>15</sup> It may be compared with his bust on the gold medallion from Siscia dated 326 now in the British Museum, illustrated; Eusebius, commentary, p. 316.

<sup>16</sup> Kent, et al., *Die Römische Münze*, Munich 1973, p. 164, Pl. XXV fig. 652 V and 652 R.

<sup>17</sup> Alföldi, *Goldprägung*, p. 92-94, 160-161, pls. 11-13 figs. 164-206, esp. n° 597, figs. 170-171. Similar portraits were naturally struck in this year, mainly in cities of the eastern part of the empire, like Constantinople, Thessaloniki, Sirium and Nicomedia, the largest officina of gold coins in the East, but also in Ticinum.

<sup>18</sup> Wolfgang Fritz Volbach, *Frühchristliche Kunst*, Munich 1958, figs 16-17, p. 49, with a date to 315. *Age of Spirituality*, p. 18, n° 11, with a date to 325-326 and bibliography with the controversial dates by various scholars.

<sup>19</sup> *Age of Spirituality*, p. 15-16, n° 9, with bibliography and a date to ca 325.

top of the head are summarily sculptured, which suggest that it was made to be seen frontally. It shows a young man rather than one in his fifties, but it has been dated to ca 325 on the basis of his upward-gazing eyes, an innovation seen in the coinage after the defeat and death of Licinius in 324. Also in favour of a young Constantine is the absence of a diadem, as already noted above. His projecting ears, more emphasised here than in other portraits of Constantine, can be compared to those seen on a solidus, struck in 316, about which more below (Fig. 6).

The large bronze head of Constantine in the Palazzo dei Conservatori in Rome, measuring 1.77 m., was part of a colossal statue, possibly a standing one, measuring ca 10 m.<sup>20</sup> (Fig. 163-164). It was placed, together with his hand and globe, on two columns in front of the Lateran Palace in ca 1200 A.D. Pope Sixtus IV transferred it to the Palazzo dei Conservatori in 1471. This head has also been identified with Constantius II (337-361), but the facial features are very close to those of the marble head of Constantine in the same Museum (Figs. 11-12).

The bronze head of Constantine in the National Museum of Belgrade, measures 24 cm.<sup>21</sup> (Figs. 165-166). It was found in Niš, the birthplace of Constantine. Traces of gilding are preserved on the eyes and ears, which suggests that this and presumably other bronze statues were gilded. The jewelled diadem, with an additional large precious stone in the middle, suggests a date after 324 A.D.<sup>22</sup> when it was first seen on the coinage, for instance, the gold coin of Constantine the Great from 326 in the Cabinet de Médailles, Paris, cited above (Fig. 157).

Constantine the Great has also been identified in two cameos of 9.5 cm. in the Cabinet des Médailles, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.<sup>23</sup> The first shows the emperor with a slightly raised head and wearing a jewelled diadem, iconographic features which suggest a date after 325 A.D. A cross has been engraved on the chest of his cuirass (Fig. 9). The

bust is executed in a fine, classicistic style with more details than one would expect in this small-size portrait. The bust was affixed to a Gothic shaft of gilded silver from 1368 to be used for coronations or as a cantorial baton in the Saint-Chapelle in Paris, to the treasury of which it belonged until 1791. The left hand is raised and the right one holds a wreath. The other cameo shows the emperor with a laurel wreath and civil dress (Fig. 159). The smile on his face recalls that seen on coinage from around 325 and may be contemporary with this date (cf. Fig. 8).

Most scholars who have studied the Arch of Constantine in Rome have been primarily interested in the *spolia*.<sup>24</sup> Here, on the contrary, the bas-reliefs which concern us most are the biographical cycle, expressly executed for Constantine, and the representations of the Unconquered Sun (*Sol invictus*).<sup>25</sup> In the biographical cycle, there are six scenes, beginning with Constantine's Departure from Milan, continuing with the Siege of Verona, the Battle of the Milvian Bridge and his triumphal entry into Rome, and terminating on the north facade with Constantine enthroned delivering an *oratio* and distributing a *largitio*<sup>26</sup> (Figs. 13-14 and 167-174). The blatant difference in style from that of the bas-reliefs executed for Trajan (98-117), Hadrian (161-180) and Marcus Aurelius (161-180), the so called 'good' emperors, is regularly noted. Elsner wrote of "the flat surfaces, the stacked, ill-proportioned and schematically realised figures". However, he pointed out that sculpture in a similar style already existed, citing the example of a marble pedestal executed for Marcus Aurelius. The same style reappears on Helena's porphyry sarcophagus in Rome<sup>27</sup> (Figs. 10 and 179). In fact, had Constantine so wished, it is likely that enough *spolia* in the same style as the

<sup>24</sup> For the Arch, notably Philip Peirce, "The Arch of Constantine." *Vid.* also, Elsner, "Imperial Rome", p. 1, 2, 33, 187-189; *Age of Spirituality*, (R. Brilliant), p. 67-69; A. Alföldi, "Cornuti: A Teutonic Contingent in the Service of Constantine the Great and its Decisive Role in the Battle of the Milvian Bridge" *DOP* 13, 1959, p. 171-179, figure 4.

<sup>25</sup> Peirce, "The Arch of Constantine," p. 414-415.

<sup>26</sup> Andreae, B., *Römische Kunst*, Freiburg, Basel, Wien, 1982, figs. 624-629. *Age of Spirituality*, p. 68. Elsner, *Imperial Rome*, figure 7, p. 18-19.

<sup>27</sup> Andreae, *Römische Kunst*, fig. 155. Volbach, *Frühchristliche Kunst*, p. 50, figs. 22-23.

<sup>20</sup> Volbach, *Frühchristliche Kunst*, p. 49-50, figs. 18-19, with bibliography.

<sup>21</sup> David Talbot Rice, *The Art of Byzantium*, London 1959, p. 289, figs. 2-3. *Age of Spirituality*, p. 16-18, n° 10, with a date to ca. 325-330.

<sup>22</sup> Alföldi, *Goldprägung*, p. 140-143, devoted a chapter on the jewel in the middle of the emperor's wreath, citing examples from August and later; it was a symbol of imperial power.

<sup>23</sup> *Byzance*, n° 33, p. 84-85.



biographical cycle on the Arch could probably have been found.<sup>28</sup> The use of two blatantly different styles is, in consequence, significant. The intelligent observer will distinguish easily between Constantine's imperial heritage, set out in the "classical" *spolia*, and his own personal achievements and projects which constitute a biographical cycle. This and later Byzantine adaptations of it as a model will be examined in due course. In spite of the use of bas-reliefs in two contrasted – virtually clashing – styles, the decorative programme of the Arch is an ideological unity, as the inscriptions make clear, particularly the dedication,<sup>29</sup> the references to Constantine as *Liberator orbis*, *Fundatorum Quietis*, *Restitutor (orbis, libertatis, respublicae)* and the phrase "that whatsoever is divine in heaven may be moved favourably in our regard". Nothing in the decorative programme refers to the Christian God.<sup>30</sup>

The case is different for the bas-reliefs representing *Sol invictus* (Fig. 13). Peirce observed that on the Arch "Constantine and his victory are explicitly identified with the succour of the Sun-god, Sol Invictus".<sup>31</sup> This is evident in a third group of bas-reliefs, which is distinct from the two aforementioned. Some elements of the iconography of the Unconquered Sun were adapted to Constantine's own portrayal. As was mentioned earlier, Eusebius's statement that Constantine already had a cross, "the victorious trophy, the truly salutary sign,"<sup>32</sup> carried before his army at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge is questionable. After all, his army consisted mainly of pagan soldiers attacking a city governed by a pagan Senate. Rather than a cross, it could have been, as some scholars have suggested, especially Hatt,<sup>33</sup> the Gallic *labarum*, which Constantine's army would continue to use.

Eusebius is more trustworthy when he writes of Constantine having a tall pole in the shape of a cross set in the hand of his statue in the centre of Rome.<sup>34</sup> It is possible, but conjectural, that the colossal head preserved

in the Palazzo dei Conservatori in Rome was part of this statue although not of the original, for which a head of Hadrian could well have been recut to resemble Constantine. Recutting was shamelessly practised on some bas-reliefs on the Arch. It has indeed been maintained that "for the colossal statue set up in 313 Constantine may have simply appropriated one of Hadrian seated. When the official portrait of the Emperor had developed to the stage we find on the later coins the statue was given a new head."<sup>35</sup>

Although little or nothing remains in the Holy Land which can be directly connected with Constantine, important art and architecture still exists in Trier, which was for Constantius Chlorus and his son Constantine the "capital of the West".<sup>36</sup> The basilica contains no decoration.<sup>37</sup> However, some paintings of high quality, covering the ceiling of an *oecus* measuring ca 7 x 10 m., were discovered under the Cathedral of Trier after the Second World War<sup>38</sup> (Fig. 182). Four female and three male busts, slightly bigger than life size, and eight pairs of putti are painted on 15 panels (Fig. 15). Three of the women have a crown and all of them a nimbus. The excavator of the *oecus*, Kempf, already identified the female figure in the middle holding a *kantharos* as Helena; and the other women would represent Constantine's wife Fausta holding a mirror, his sister Constantia holding a jewellery box, and his daughter in law Helena the younger, who holds a lyre in the reconstruction (Figs. 16-19). Other identifications followed, for example, with Fausta in the middle,

<sup>28</sup> Harrison, *Constantinian Portrait*, p. 94. Analogous statues of Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius enthroned exist in the Roman Forum, Marvin Ross, "Bronze statues of Constantine the Great", *DOP* 13, 1959, p. 181, figure 18.

<sup>29</sup> H. Leclercq, "Trèves", *Dictionnaire d'art chrétien et liturgie* XVI (1953), 2716-2717.

<sup>30</sup> Leclercq, 2723; *Age of Spirituality*, p. 113-114, plate 102; Elsner, *Imperial Rome*, p. 131-132, figures 88, 90.

<sup>31</sup> Irving Lavin, "The Ceiling Frescoes in Trier and Illusionism in Constantinian Painting", *DOP* 21, 1967, p. 97-113; Elsner, *Imperial Rome*, p. 132-133, figure 91. Theodore Konrad Kempf, "Das Haus der heiligen Helena," *Neues Trierisches Jahrbuch*. Beiheft 1978, 3-16. André Wankenne, "Constantin et Hélène à Trèves", *Les études classiques* 52 1984, p. 313-316. Hugo Brandenburg, "Zur Deutung der Deckenbilder aus der Trierer Domgrabung," *Boreas* 8 1985 (Münstersche Beiträge zur Archäologie), 143-189. Erika Simon, *Die Konstantinischen Deckengemälde in Trier*, Mainz am Rhein 1986.

<sup>28</sup> Elsner, *Imperial Rome*, p. 18-21.

<sup>29</sup> *Age of Spirituality*, n° 58, p. 67.

<sup>30</sup> Peirce, "The Arch of Constantine," p. 406.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>32</sup> Eusebius, I 37; commentary, p. 214.

<sup>33</sup> Hatt, "La vision de Constantin", p. 427-436.

<sup>34</sup> Eusebius, I 39, p. 85; commentary, p. 218.



allegories, various personifications, like Iuventus, Salus, Sapientia, Pulchritudo, or personifications for which portraits of the imperial family were used as models. The two bearded men were identified as philosophers or poets, for example, Apulius and Heraclitus of Ephesus. The paintings can be dated between shortly after 315 and about 326, during Constantine's reign. They are uniquely haloed portraits of women and pairs of putti. Similar putti figure on the reverse of a gold coin of Constantine. While the identification of the female portraits in Trier is conjectural, they are certainly valuable as rare surviving examples of high-quality Constantinian painting. Wankenne followed the excavator's much earlier suggestion as to the identity of the three women. If the woman wearing a crown, is really Helena, this would be our earliest portrait of her.

Authentic portraits of Helena and Fausta, possibly with a certain degree of idealisation, can be seen on the coinage. A few of the several examples follow here: An effigy of Helena appears on a golden medallion in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des médailles, Paris.<sup>39</sup> (Fig. 20). She is represented with thin nose and small mouth; her large eye is rendered in frontal view. She wears a bejewelled diadem on her neatly combed hair with a hair lock falling over it at the front; she also has earrings and a necklace consisting of two rows of pearls. Her name, FL(avia) HELENA AUGUSTA, is inscribed around her. The reverse shows a standing personification holding a branch and inscribed SECURITAS REIPUBLICAE (Fig. 185). In the exergue, the letters SMT (Sacra Moneta Ticinensis) denote that the medallion was struck in Pavia. Another portrait of Helena appears on a copper medallion in the British Museum, struck in Rome<sup>40</sup> (Figs. 183-184). She has similar facial features to the previous medallion, but her diadem is broader. The inscription reads, FLAVIA AELENA (sic) AUGUSTA. The reverse shows a standing personification inscribed PIETAS AUGUSTES (sic), also identified as the empress by some scholars. She holds a child in one

hand and gives an apple with the other hand to a second child, standing in front of her. One of the several portraits of Fausta can be seen on a *solidus* from a private collection, struck in Pavia<sup>41</sup> (Fig. 21). She has a thin nose, small mouth and wavy hair fastened at the back in a knot; her eye is correctly shown in side view, in contrast to that of Helena (Fig. 20). She is designated as FLAV(ia) MAX(ima) FAUSTA AUG(usta). The reverse reveals a standing woman, meant to represent Fausta, if we may judge from her wavy hair (Fig. 186). She holds two children, presumably Constantius II (b. 317) and Constans (b. 320?). There is an inscription SALUS REIPUBLICAE (Welfare of the Republic). The inscription SMT in the exergue denotes again that the coin was struck in Ticinum. Another medallion of two *solidi* in the British Museum shows on the obverse an almost identical portrait of Fausta, again inscribed as FLAVIA MAXIMA FAUSTA AUGUSTA.<sup>42</sup> On the reverse, a nimbed woman, identified by some scholars as Fausta, is shown frontally enthroned on a podium with garlands, flanked by two genii holding a wreath each (Fig. 187). She holds a child on her lap, possibly Constans. She is flanked by two personifications, Felicitas holding the caduceus of Mercury, and Spes (Hope) presumably holding a flower in her raised hand.<sup>43</sup> The inscription reads, PIETAS AUGUSTAE; PTR in the exergue denotes that the medallion was struck in Trier (*Prima officina Treveris*). Helena and Fausta on these coins are designated as Augustae, which dates them after Constantine became sole ruler in 324 and declared them Augustae. Those of Fausta were executed before her death in 326. The association of the portraits of Helena and Fausta with personifications, established on the coins, either with an inscription or with a figure, was used as an argument for identifying the personifications on the ceiling paintings in Trier, examined above, as portraits of the imperial family of Constantine (Figs. 15-19).

<sup>39</sup> Alföldi, *Goldprägung*, 95, 196 n° 462, fig. 155, with more examples of this type. Kent, et al., *Die Römische Münze*, Munich 1973, p. 163, pl. 138 fig. 648 R and pl. XXIV fig. 648 V.

<sup>40</sup> Kent, et al., *Die Römische Münze*, Munich 1973, p. 163, pl. 138 figs. 649 R-V. Constantine the Great, p. 145, n° 93.

<sup>41</sup> Kent, et al., *Die Römische Münze*, p. 163, figs. 647 V and 647 R. For more coins of Fausta of this type, see Alföldi, *Goldprägung*, pl. 10, 152-154 and 157-159.

<sup>42</sup> Kent, et al., *Die Römische Münze*, p. 163, fig. 644 R. Alföldi, *Goldprägung*, p. 181 n° 292, pl. 10 fig. 152, in Berlin.

<sup>43</sup> Simon, *Trier*, p. 17, fig. 7.

Christian art existed long before Constantine, often juxtaposed with pagan and even Jewish art as at Dura Europos.<sup>44</sup> This practice continued after Constantine's access to power, as in the Via Latina catacomb (315-370), with its syncretistic mix of pagan, Jewish and Christian themes.<sup>45</sup> After Constantine's accession, the carving of Christian sarcophagi developed considerably. It can be shown that some were carved by the same sculptors as those who worked on his Arch, for example, the sarcophagi in Arles with New and Old Testament scenes<sup>46</sup> (Figs. 180-181). However, if these sarcophagi owe nothing personally to Constantine, they witness to the fact that with his accession to power the climate had become more propitious for Christian art.

For official propaganda, Constantine followed in the line of his predecessors. He used the same iconographical types, only adapting them occasionally by the introduction of some Christian symbol. Richard Brilliant lists the types which were in current use: Equestrian monuments, Triumphal entries (the *Adventus*), Addressing the people (the *Adlocutio*), Distributing largesse (the *Largitio*), Colossal statues, Sumptuous court dress, Haloed figures, Apotheosis (the *Consecratio*), Enthronement in majesty.<sup>47</sup> Some of these types have already been mentioned, notably those which figure on the Arch with no Christian connotation: Enthronement in majesty, the *Largitio*, and the *Adlocutio*.<sup>48</sup> A far more interesting example of Constantine making an *Adlocutio* is that on the reverse of a triumphal silver medallion in the Staatliche Münzsammlung, Munich<sup>49</sup> (Fig. 189-190). It was minted in Ticinum (Pavia) in 313 or 315

<sup>44</sup> A. Perkins, *The Art of Dura Europos*, Oxford 1973; Kurt Weitzmann and Herbert L. Kessler, *The frescoes of the Dura synagogue and Christian art*, Washington 1990. Elsner, *Imperial Rome*, p. 210-216.

<sup>45</sup> Elsner, *op. cit.*, p. 218-219, 269.

<sup>46</sup> *Age of Spirituality*, contribution by Erich Dinkler, p. 397-401, figure 55, 56, p. 427-429, plate 386.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 60-61.

<sup>48</sup> Peirce, *The Arch of Constantine*, p. 414-415.

<sup>49</sup> Alföldi, *Goldprägung*, 41-42, pl. 4 fig. 61. Kent, *et al.*, *Die Römische Münze*, p. 160 n° 632, pl. 136. *Age of Spirituality*, n° 57, p. 66. *Vid.* the erudite study by Konrad Kraft, "Das Silbermedallion Constantins des Grossen mit dem Christogram auf der Helm", *Jahrbuch für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte* 5-6, 1954-1955, p. 151-178.

on the occasion of his victory on Maxentius or for his Decennalia. Constantine stands on a raised platform wearing military uniform with his chlamys thrown back. His right arm is outstretched and in his left holds a trophy. To his left is a personification of Victory. On either side of him are *vexilla* in the form of a cross. Below is his audience, dismounted members of his cavalry. Around this scene, SALUS REIPUBLICAE is written, a virtue also used for female members of the imperial family, for example, for Fausta (Fig. 186). On the obverse side, there is a bust of Constantine wearing a helmet in the form of a diadem, to which is fixed a disc with the Greek letters XP, and holding the bridle of his horse<sup>50</sup> (Fig. 189). The sceptre has a ball above the horizontal balk and a smaller one above it.<sup>51</sup> On his shield the Lupercale is carved. The inscription reads, IMP(erator) CONSTANTINUS P(ius) F(elix) AUG(ustus). There are no surviving equestrian monuments to Constantine. However, there exist small statues of Constantine on horseback, possibly executed after his death but which can be plausibly supposed to derive from an equestrian monument<sup>52</sup> (Fig. 188). The case of weights which are statuettes of the enthroned Constantine will be discussed later.

A detail of Constantine's iconography mentioned above in the description of his *Adlocutio* on the triumphal medallion from Ticinum, and which recurs regularly, is his outstretched right arm (Fig. 190). Various scholars have called attention to it.<sup>53</sup> This gesture was taken from the iconography of the Unconquered Sun. It recurs in all the bas-reliefs of the Sun on the Arch, although Peirce illustrates only one on which his right arm is, in fact, broken. Another typical facet of Sol's iconography which recurs in this relief is his depiction mounting to heaven in a chariot. This theme is recalled in the representation of Constantine's apotheosis made in Rome. On a Roman mosaic now in the Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Bonn, the Sun is represented figuratively head on in a

<sup>50</sup> *Age of Spirituality*, n° 37, p. 66.

<sup>51</sup> Alföldi, *Goldprägung*, 146-153, examined this and other sceptres and concluded that Constantine had no sceptres in the form of a cross.

<sup>52</sup> *Age of Spirituality*, n° 12, p. 19, probably from 320-325, in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Antikensammlung, VI 119, Vienna.

<sup>53</sup> Peirce, "The Arch of Constantine," p. 407, citing H.P. L'Orange, *Studies in the Iconography of Kingship in the Ancient World*, Oslo 1953, p. 139.



chariot drawn by four horses (Fig. 22). He holds a pole in his right hand. The particularly interesting detail of this mosaic is the Sun's nimbus from which emanate numerous rays of light. Peirce recalls pictorial analogies in which Christ is represented with the attributes of Sol, for example the partially destroyed mosaic in the Tomb of the Julii, Vatican Cemetery<sup>54</sup> (Fig. 23). Here Christ is also seated in a chariot drawn by horses with rays emanating from his halo; his right arm is raised but almost entirely destroyed. Constantine's iconography is certainly dependent on that of Sol and Christ. The element which was most regularly copied was certainly the raised right arm. Further, on the coins minted in the first years of his reign, Sol's head, placed beside Constantine's, is regularly represented with rays emanating from his halo; however, they are not attributed to the emperor himself. An example can be seen on a gold medallion of nine *solidi* in the Cabinet des Médailles, Paris, struck in Ticinum in 313 A.D.<sup>55</sup> (Fig. 24). He is shown in armour, wearing a laurel diadem and holding a spear on his shoulders and a shield. On the shield, Sol is frontally represented on a quadriga and flanked by a star and the moon sickle in the upper part, and by Tellus and Oceanus in the lower one. The emperor is inscribed as INVICTUS CONSTANTINUS MAX(imus) AUG(ustus).<sup>56</sup>

Another specimen is a *solidus* in the British Museum, London, also minted in Ticinum in 316 A.D.<sup>57</sup> (Fig. 26). He is also clad in military costume, but holds a globe and raises his right hand in salutation; the inscription reads, COMIS CONSTANTINI AUG(usti). In other examples of the same period, Sol is omitted and Constantine wears his diadem with emanating rays. This can be seen on a golden medallion of two *solidi* in the British Museum, struck in Trier between 313-315<sup>58</sup> (Figs. 191-192). He is inscribed IMP(erator) CONSTANTINUS P(ius) F(elix) AUG(ustus). The reverse of this coin shows the fortified city of Trier with seven towers, the imperial residence of that time. Above the entrance, a

statue of Constantine is shown standing, holding a sceptre and raising the right hand in a gesture of salutation or speech. A bridge over the river Mosel is visible in front of the gates. Two sitting figures, identified as barbarian prisoners, flank the city. Around the city, AUGG (Augustorum) GLORIA is written, the plural also alluding to Licinius I. The letters PTRE in the exergue stand for *Prima Officina Treveris*, as already noted. Constantine still continued to represent himself as Sol after the Edict of Milan in 313. On a medallion of one and a half *solidus*, struck ca. 317, he is again shown wearing a diadem with emanating rays<sup>59</sup> (Figs. 193-194). CONSTANTINUS P(ius) F(elix) AUG(ustus) is written around his portrait. The reverse shows Constantine in toga and a similar diadem receiving from the personification of Securitas a globe with Victoria on it offering to him a wreath. The inscription around these figures reads: SECURITAS REI|PUBLICAE. Below the lion and the panther, carved under the feet of Constantine and Securitas, the letters SMTS (*Sacra moneta Thessalonicensis*) are written. They denote that the medallion was struck in the newly established mint of Thessaloniki, which often used models from other *officinae*, like Trier and Ticinum. The medallion was most probably struck on the occasion of the peace between Constantine and Licinius I after the end of the civil war between them. The picture alludes to this peace, considered by Constantine as a victory, and to the security which he guaranteed for the Balkan territory that he had annexed to his empire. Constantine still ascribed his successes to the help of Sol rather than Christ. The iconography of the Unconquered Sun was represented on numerous coins, often minted up to at least 319, and sporadically later. It has been suggested that they are the result of numismatic conservatism, but it is far more likely that they witness to Constantine's continuing devotion to the Unconquered Sun.<sup>60</sup> Even in ca. 326 Constantine would be represented with a diadem with emanating rays, as seen on a medallion of one and a half *solidus*, struck in Antioch<sup>61</sup> (Fig. 197). He is clad in the consular trabea, holds a globe and raises his right hand, just as on the *solidus* of 316 from Ticinum, mentioned above,

<sup>54</sup> Peirce, "The Arch of Constantine," p. 408, figure 21.

<sup>55</sup> Alföldi, *Goldprägung*, p. 166, n° 118, fig. 60. Kent, et al., *Die Römische Münze*, Munich 1973, p. 159-160, fig. 629.

<sup>56</sup> For the reverse, showing an *Adventus*, see below (Fig. 25).

<sup>57</sup> *Constantine the Great*, p. 145, n° 89.

<sup>58</sup> Kent, et al., *Die Römische Münze*, p. 160-161, n° 633, pl. 136.

<sup>59</sup> Kent, et al., *Die Römische Münze*, p. 161 n° 635, pl. 137.

<sup>60</sup> P. Bruun, "The Consecration Coins of Constantine the Great", *Arctos*, New series 1, 1954, p. 19-31; Eusebius, commentary, p. 207.

<sup>61</sup> Kent, et al., *Die Römische Münze*, p. 163-164 n° 651, pl. 139.

on which he is represented with Sol (Fig. 26). On the *solidus* from Antioch he is inscribed D(ominus) N(oster) CONSTANTINUS MAX(imus) AUG(ustus). The reverse reveals his sons Constantius II and Constantine II clad and inscribed as consuls, which dates the coin to ca. 326. The iconography used for Constantine on this *solidus*, without the appearance of Sol next to him, is already seen on an *argenteus* for Maximinus Daia (309-313) in the British Museum, struck in Trier during his reign<sup>62</sup> (Figs. 195-196). Maximinus is clad in armour and paludamentum, holds a globe and raises his right hand. He is inscribed IMP(erator) MAXI|MINUS AUG(ustus). The reverse shows Sol on a quadriga, holding a whip and raising his right hand. The inscription around it reads, SOLI INVIC|TO COMITI, and in the exergue, PTR is written. We also saw a quadriga with Sol on the shield of Constantine on a medallion mentioned above (Fig. 24). The diadem with emanating rays, worn by Hellenistic rulers through the Emperor Augustus and other Roman emperors, was, thus, also worn by Constantine.

An early *Adventus* of Constantine is represented on a *nummus* in the British Museum, struck in London between 310-312<sup>63</sup> (Fig. 27). He is shown on horseback, holding a spear in his left hand and raising his right in a gesture of greeting. The inscription reads, ADVENTUS AUG(usti). On the medallion of nine *solidi* in the Cabinet des Médailles, Paris, mentioned above, he wears a cloak thrown back over his shoulders, leaving his chest uncovered<sup>64</sup> (Figs. 25 and 24). He is seated on horseback, holds a spear in his left and again his right arm is outstretched. He is preceded by an angel of Victory holding a laurel crown and a palm branch and followed by an attendant, a helmeted Virtus holding a staff and a *vestillum*. Both personifications have one breast uncovered. The inscriptions read, FELIX ADVENTUS AUGG NN and SMT (Sacra Moneta Ticinensis). The iconography is therefore conventional. It is

<sup>62</sup> Kent, et al., *Die Römische Münze*, p. 158 n° 628, pl. 136.

<sup>63</sup> Constantine the Great, p. 143, n° 87.

<sup>64</sup> Alföldi, *Goldprägung*, p. 166, n° 118, fig. 60. Kent, et al., *Die Römische Münze*, p. 159-160, pl. XXIV fig. 629. Walter, "Papal Political Imagery in the Medieval Lateran Palace", reprinted, *Prayer and Power VIII*, p. 126, figure 28, with bibliography.

noteworthy that a galley was added to the *Adventus* of Constantius I, seen on a medallion of ten *aurei* from Beaurains, in Musée d'Arras<sup>65</sup> (Fig. 28). The medallion was issued in Trier in 297 and shows the emperor on horseback holding a spear and approaching the personification of the city, identified by the abbreviation LON(dinium). She receives him with outstretched hands, kneeling in front of a walled city with two towers. The inscription around Constantius reads, REDDITOR LUCIS AETERNAE, and that in the exergue, PTR (Prima officina Treveris). Picture and inscriptions allude to the sudden appearance of the fleet of Constantius that saved the city from the plundering troops of Allectus. The obverse of this medallion represents Constantius I with the characteristic short hair and stubble beard of his time. He wears a laurel wreath and is clad in armour and paludamentum (Fig. 198). He is inscribed as FL(avius) VAL(erius) CONSTANTIUS NOBIL(issimus) CAES(ar).

Constantine's dress in the *Largitio* and *Adlocutio* scenes on the Arch could be considered to be sumptuous (Figs. 173-174), but on the medallion from Ticinum in the Staatliche Münzsammlung, Munich, mentioned above, he wears military uniform<sup>66</sup> (Fig. 190). In some of the Hadrianic tondi, belonging to the *spolia* incorporated in the decoration of the Arch, where the head has been recarved with Constantine's features, he has a halo. This can be best seen in the Sacrifice to Apollo, the Lion Hunt and the Boar Hunt (Figs. 175-178). The last reveals the best preserved portrait of the emperor in the arch, showing a young Constantine. We have already seen that Constantine also has a halo on a *solidus* minted in Ticinum in 316 (Fig. 2).

Constantine's *Apotheosis* was represented in a summary form on coins issued by his sons after his death on 9 September 337.<sup>67</sup> For example, on a coin in the Cabinet des Médailles, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, struck in Constantinople, he is represented standing on a quadriga drawn by across four galloping horses. From the quadriga he extends his

<sup>65</sup> Kent, et al., *Die Römische Münze*, p. 154-155, pl. 131 fig. 591. Constantine the Great, p. 53 and 143, n° 17.

<sup>66</sup> *Age of Spirituality*, p. 66, n° 57.

<sup>67</sup> P. Bruun, "The Consecration Coins of Constantine the Great", *Arctos*, New series 1, 1954, p. 19-31; Eusebius, commentary, p. 207.



raised hand, while a hand is held down towards him from on high<sup>68</sup> (Figs. 199-200). On the obverse, he is represented veiled, like on the quadriga, and is inscribed as DIVUS CONSTANTINUS AUG(ustus) PATER AUGG (Augustorum). The adjective *divus* and the quadriga are heathen motives of consecration, while the hand of God is a new element in the composition. This and other coins of this type correspond to the description given by Eusebius at the end of his chapter about the funeral of Constantine: "At the same time coins were struck portraying the Blessed One on the obverse in the form of one with head veiled, on the reverse like a charioteer on a quadriga, being taken up by a right hand stretched out to him from above."<sup>69</sup> It lacks the quality of the ivory in the British Museum, representing the apotheosis of a deceased person, possibly the emperor Julian the Apostate or Symmachus<sup>70</sup> (Fig. 30).

There exist a small number of unique representations which can be associated with Constantine. One is the large cameo from agate of exquisite quality, measuring 20.5 x 29 cm. in the Geld en Bankmuseum in Utrecht<sup>71</sup> (Fig. 32). The linear style of the heavy draperies of the figures has been compared to that seen on the arch of Constantine and the emperor represented in a chariot pulled by two centaurs has been identified as Constantine. He has a laurel diadem and holds the thunderbolt of Jupiter. He embraces Fausta, whose head is veiled as a bride; she holds a corn-ear and a puppy, attributes of Demeter. The female figure behind Constantine has been identified as his grandmother Claudia, but she may very well be his mother Helena. The boy in front of the couple has been identified as Crispus, a son of Constantine from his first wife Minervina. He is clad in military costume and holds his sword scabbard. A winged Victoria flies in the direction of the emperor and

<sup>68</sup> Byzance, p. 160, figure 3, and p. 161. Eusebius, IV 73, p. 182; commentary, figure 11b, p. 346, with extensive bibliography.

<sup>69</sup> Eusebius, IV 73, p. 182; commentary, p. 346, with extensive bibliography and figure 11, showing a similar coin in Dumbarton Oaks.

<sup>70</sup> Age of Spirituality, n° 60, p. 71. In Byzantium, n° 45, p. 57-58, the figure is identified as Q. Aurelius Symmachus (died 402). Elsner, *Imperial Rome*, p. 30-32, figure 11, suggests both possible identities for the figure.

<sup>71</sup> *Constantine the Great*, p. 138-139, n° 76.

offers him a laurel wreath, suggesting that the cameo was most probably carved on the occasion of a victory. The two men trampled by the centaurs have been identified as Roman soldiers and not as barbarians, whom one expects to be bearded. The victory alluded to is possibly that over Maxentius on the Milvian Bridge in 313.

On a medallion in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna<sup>72</sup> (Figs. 31, 201) Constantine, with his chlamys thrown back over his shoulders. He is crowned by a hand extended from on high; this latter has been considered to be a Christian feature<sup>73</sup> (Fig. 31). He is surrounded by two sons, Crispus and Constantine, looking at the emperor.<sup>74</sup> Crispus on the right, wearing a chlamys like his father's, is crowned by a victory, possibly an allusion to his participation in the victorious battle against Licinius. Constantine, the other son, is "embraced" by a Virtue with helm on the other side of his father. The inscription around the figures reads, GAUDIUM ROMANORUM, characterising the male members of the imperial family as joy of the Romans. In the exergue, MCONS (Moneta Constantinopolitensis) is written. The obverse shows the bust of Constantius wearing a laurel diadem and military costume (Fig. 201). He holds a spear and a shield, on which a rider leads his troops in battle. FL(avius) IVL(ius) CONSTANTIVS NOB(ilissimus) CAES(ar) is written around the bust, which denotes that the medallion was struck on the occasion of his elevation to Caesar in 324 or very shortly after. The other two sons of Constantine were already Caesars since 317 A.D.

Another representation of Constantine with his sons has points in common with a picture described by Eusebius.<sup>75</sup> It was a very high panel set before the imperial palace in Constantinople. Above the emperor was 'the saving sign'. Either side of him stand his sons. They are trampling a dragon which is being pierced by a spear and thrust down into the depths

<sup>72</sup> Walter, *Prayer and Power* IV, p. 187-188, figure 7a. Alföldi, *Goldprägung*, p. 109, 118, 136, 168, n° 148, fig. 214.

<sup>73</sup> Alföldi, *Goldprägung*, p. 109, 118, 136, 168, n° 148, fig. 214. Walter, *Prayer and Power* IV, p. 187-188, figure 7a.

<sup>74</sup> Alföldi, *loc. cit.*, dated the medallion to 326-327 A.D., which means that Crispus, who died in 326, is missing here. The two sons flanking the emperor on the reverse should be then Constantine and Constantius.

<sup>75</sup> Eusebius, III 3, p. 122; commentary, p. 256.

of the sea. Eusebius interpreted the scene as fulfilling a prophecy of Isaiah 27.1. An analogous scene figures on the *labarum*, which Eusebius saw personally only rather late in Constantine's reign.<sup>76</sup> It was, in fact, as noted above, a military standard or *vexillum*, likely to be of Gallic origin.<sup>77</sup> Eusebius, who refers to it frequently,<sup>78</sup> wrote that Constantine made his troops carry the *labarum* before them in battle. It enabled him to overcome Licinius and other enemies. Eusebius attributed magical properties to it; the soldier carrying it was inviolate. Its form was modified over the years.<sup>79</sup> On a *nummus* struck in ca. 327, it is a long bar piercing a serpent<sup>80</sup> (Fig. 29). From a transversal bar hangs a banner with clefted portraits of Constantine and his sons, too small for their features to be distinguished. It is surmounted by the 'saving sign', the XP. The inscription reads SPES PUBLICA(e), clearly denoting that the hope of the empire was now in the hands of Christ. In the exergue CONST(antinopolis) is written. The obverse of this coin shows a portrait of Constantine with a laurel wreath, inscribed as Maximus Augustus (Fig. 202). It is similar but not identical to those of this period, for example that seen on our Fig. 8.

Another representation is a gold coin-set pendant<sup>81</sup> (Figs. 33-34). This is a complex object, in which the only clearly identifiable part is the central coin. On the obverse, Constantine in bust form, clad in military uniform, holds a globe and raises his right hand. He wears a diadem with emanating rays and there is an inscription D(ominus) N(oster) CONSTANTINUS MAX(imus) AUG(ustus). The iconography of

<sup>76</sup> Eusebius, I 30, p. 81, "This was something which the Emperor himself saw fit to let me also set eyes on". He did not meet Constantine earlier than the First Council of Nicaea in 325. The *labarum* first appeared on coins in 325, *ibidem*, commentary, p. 208-209, figure 2.

<sup>77</sup> Hatt, "La vision de Constantin", p. 427-436.

<sup>78</sup> Eusebius, *index*, *sub verbo*, *labarum*.

<sup>79</sup> Hatt, *art. cit.*

<sup>80</sup> *Constantine the Great*, p. 145, n° 92. Kent, *et al.*, *Die Römische Münze*, p. 164, pl. 139 fig. 653.

<sup>81</sup> *Byzantium*, n° 2, p. 26-27. *Vid.* also, David Buckton, "The Beauty of Holiness, *opus intrarsile* from a Late Antique workshop", *Jewellery Studies* I, 1983-1984, p. 15-19; *idem*, "Byzantine coin-set pendant", *National Art-Collections Fund Review* 1985, p. 92-93.

Constantine is identical with that of many depictions of him as Sol over a long range of years (cf. Figs. 24 and 26). On the reverse of the coin, the busts of his sons Crispus and Constantine are again identified by an inscription: CRISPUS ET CONSTANTINUS NOB(ilissimi) CAES(are)S CO(n)S(ule)S II. In the exergue, SIRM(ium) is written, the city in which the coin was struck. The Roman number II denotes that the coin was struck on the occasion of the celebration of the second consulship of the Caesars, which dates the coin to 321. They wear consular dress with the *trabea*, laurel diadem, and each holds a globe and staff, surmounted by an eagle (Fig. 34). The rest, the surrounding work in *opus intrarsile* (pierced work, creating an open work design from sheet metal) and six busts of which only one can be clearly identified by his Phrygian cap as Attis, is of uncertain date but probably later than Constantine's reign. Three similar pendants were found together with this one, of which one is in the Louvre and the other two at Dumbarton Oaks.

Mention should also be made of a bronze medallion of which the best specimen is now in the Museo Archeologico di Florence. It interested Alföldi greatly but seems to have been ignored by other specialists in Byzantine iconography. On the obverse is a bust portrait of Constantine wearing a bejewelled diadem, similar to others made in the later years of his reign. On the reverse is a seated figure with his chest uncovered although the end of his chlamys can be seen draped over his left shoulder. He holds a staff in his left hand. Another figure, wearing armour, presents the seated one with a phoenix, a symbol of resurrection and immortality. Beside him is a panther making a *proskynesis*. Alföldi interprets the scene as Constantine, the Supreme God, receiving the sovereignty of the Orient from his eldest son, a new Dionysos to whom the panther was sacred. He maintains that it was made in Rome and commemorates Constantine's victory over Licinius, in which case it would date from after the elimination of Licinius in 324. The representation of Constantine partly unclothed, which disturbed Alföldi, had Roman antecedents. Rome as the medallion's place of origin is likely, as it was here that some pagan representations of him were made after his death, when he was given the

title of *divus*.<sup>82</sup> In his lifetime, Constantine would not have accepted the representation of himself as a god. Consequently this medallion would have been made after 337, no doubt during the reign of his son Constantius (337-361).<sup>83</sup>

## CONSTANTINE'S ICONOGRAPHY FROM 337 TO 843

### THE LEGEND OF CONSTANTINE, HELENA AND THE CROSS

Legends may have an icon as their starting point, but more often Byzantine pictures translate legends into visual terms. It is therefore necessary to begin by a brief account of the legendary figure of Constantine.<sup>1</sup> Interpretation of his character probably started in his lifetime, certainly as soon as he was dead. Eusebius may have been the first to interpret it, assimilating him to Christ.<sup>2</sup> Constantine was also a new Moses, whose victory at the Milvian Bridge was likened to the Israelites crossing the Red Sea.<sup>3</sup> However, this assimilation does not seem to have been taken up specifically in iconography, although the name of Moses recurs frequently throughout the *Life*.<sup>4</sup>

In the sixth century, Theodoros Anagnostes<sup>5</sup> developed the legend of Constantine and Helena's association with the Cross: Constantine's vision, his encouragement of devotion to it, and Helena's (apocryphal) discovery of the Cross in Palestine. This was the origin of their standard iconographical type, developed in the overall context of the iconography of the Cross. Theodoros Anagnostes made much of Constantine's conversion of Byzantium into Constantinople. He also discussed

<sup>1</sup> A. Kazhdan, "Constantin imaginaire. Byzantine Legends of the Ninth Century about Constantine the Great", *Byzantion* 57, 1987, p. 196-200, presents summarily the legends recorded from the preceding centuries.

<sup>2</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, IV 72, p. 181. "He is ... like Christ".

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, I 38, p. 84-85; commentary, p. 215. The comparison of Constantine with Moses, "The great Servant", is explicit in I 39, p. 85.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, *Life*, *vid.* Moses *sub nomine* in index.

<sup>5</sup> *Historia ecclesiastica*, edited G. Ch. Hansen, Berlin 1971.

<sup>82</sup> Eusebius, IV 72, p. 181-182; commentary, p. 348, where it is said that the phoenix was first called a symbol of immortality by Clement, I 26 I.

<sup>83</sup> A. Alföldi, "Cormuti: A Teutonic Contingent in the Service of Constantine the Great, and its Decisive Role in the Battle of the Milvian Bridge" *DOP* 13, 1959, p. 171-172, figure 3.



Constantine's controversy with Arius and his divine punishment. However, it is unlikely that Constantine ever fully grasped the nature of the disagreements between Orthodox and Arians or considered Arius to be a genuine heretic. It is virtually certain that Constantine was baptised by the Arian bishop of Nicomedia, Eusebius, a fact about which many Byzantine writers, starting with Eusebius of Caesarea, were inclined to be reticent.<sup>6</sup> John Malalas, a contemporary of Theodoros, wrote about the construction of Constantinople in more detail.<sup>7</sup> He mentioned specifically statues of Constantine and Helena. He also, surprisingly, attributed Constantine's baptism to pope Sylvester, a legend which recurred in Byzantine tradition, but was to become widespread in the West, particularly after the composition of the apocryphal *Constitutum Constantini*.<sup>8</sup> The anonymous *Chronicon Paschale*,<sup>9</sup> composed soon after 629, depends in part on Malalas, or on a source common to them both. Their accounts of the construction of Constantinople are similar. However, this chronicle, unlike that of Malalas, attributes Constantine's baptism to Eusebius of Nicomedia. It plays down the status of Helena, qualifying her union with Constantius Chlorus as adulterous. Further, it asserts that Constantine murdered his son Crispus. This text can hardly be qualified as a panegyric. The date of the opusculum *On the Cross*, attributed to a monk called Alexander,<sup>10</sup> cannot be fixed securely although generally scholars opt for the sixth century. The author, in his detailed account of Constantine's life, affirms that he was baptised in Nicomedia. As the title of the opusculum implies, the author was particularly interested in Constantine's association with the Cross.

<sup>6</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, commentary, p. 282, did not mention Eusebius of Nicomedia.

<sup>7</sup> *Chronographia*, edited D. Dindorf, Bonn 1831.

<sup>8</sup> Ch. Walter, "Papal Political Imagery in the Medieval Lateran Palace", *CahArch* 20, 1970, p. 172; reprinted *Prayer and Power VIIa, Collected series*, Ashgate, Aldershot 1993. Garth Fowden, "The Last Days of Constantine: Oppositional Versions and Their Influence", *The Journal of Roman Studies* 84, 1994, p. 163-170. G. Bonamente, "Sull'ortodossia di Costantino, Gli *Actus Sylvestri* dall'invenzione all'autenticazione", *Bizantinistica*, Series II, 6, 2004, p. 1-46, is remarkable for his penetrating analysis of the ideological background to the legend that pope Sylvester baptised Constantine.

<sup>9</sup> Also edited D. Dindorf, Bonn 1832.

<sup>10</sup> PG 86, 4016-4049.

## THE PORTRAYAL OF CONSTANTINE AND HELENA AFTER THEIR DEATH

Remarkably few representations of Constantine have survived from the time of his death up to the seventh century. The bronze medallion of his divinisation, one example of which is in Florence, was attributed by Alföldi to his lifetime, but it seems to me, as I suggested above, more likely to have been executed after Constantine's death at the instigation of his son and successor.<sup>11</sup> The bronze statuette of Constantine in Vienna<sup>12</sup> dating from his reign, itself probably copying a lost monumental statue of the Emperor on horseback, may be the only surviving example of such statuettes (Fig. 188). One would have provided the iconographical type taken up in the miniatures which recur in the marginal Psalters.<sup>13</sup> Some notion of its iconography can be formed from the representations of Constantine as a warrior in the marginal Psalters, which will be presented later.<sup>14</sup> No pictures have survived from this period of Constantine as founder of Constantinople, although the ninth-century mosaic over the door of Saint Sophia, where he is portrayed presenting the city to the Virgin, probably copies a lost earlier one, because he is beardless (Fig. 35), although by that time – and later – he invariably has a beard.

<sup>11</sup> A. Alföldi, "Cornuti: A Teutonic Contingent in the Service of Constantine the Great and its Decisive Role in the Battle of the Milvian Bridge", *DOP* 13, 1959.

<sup>12</sup> Philip Peirce, "The Arch of Constantine: Propaganda and Ideology in Late Roman Art", *Art History* 12 4, December 1989, p. 407-409.

<sup>13</sup> *Vid. infra*, Constantine's Biographical Cycles, Appendix, 2. Constantine a warrior on horseback.

<sup>14</sup> For example in the Chludov Psalter, f. 58v, illustrating Psalm 59, 6. Walter, "Latter-Day Saints" and the Image of Christ in the Ninth-Century Marginal Psalters", *Revue des études byzantines* 45, 1987, p. 209, figure 1; reprinted, *Prayer and Power in Byzantine and Papal Imagery*, X.

In fact the only other surviving representations of Constantine from this period appear on a series of weights.<sup>15</sup> Five of them are known; the best preserved is in the Staatliche Museen, Berlin, because it is complete with steelyard and pan, the latter being an invention attributed to the Romans<sup>16</sup> (Figs. 36 and 203). In each case Constantine is represented seated on a throne. He wears a diadem with a hole above it, by which to hang the weight on the scales. His chlamys is not thrown back over his shoulder but open in front exposing his chest. Ross divides the weights into two groups, of which the three earlier ones, according to him, in Berlin, Washington and Cherson, did not have a cross on the globe in the emperor's right hand. Of the two later ones, in Princeton and Moscow, that in Princeton has such a cross on the globe (Fig. 204), while it has been broken off the one in Moscow. Ross surmises that these statuettes were mass produced. This would explain the low standard of their workmanship, as well as the impossibility of dating them more precisely than to the period between the fifth and early seventh century. The hypothesis of Ross is surely right that they copy an earlier statue of Constantine enthroned similar to those of Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius in the Roman Forum.<sup>17</sup> He adduces further a bronze statuette in the Museum of Copenhagen of a standing figure which has been identified as Constantine.<sup>18</sup> No other representations of Constantine from this period are known to me.

A similar statuette, probably of the emperor Nicephoros Phocas (602-610), is in the British Museum (Fig. 205). This is not mentioned by Ross. Statuettes of empresses could also serve as counterpoise weights, for example, those in the Benaki Museum,<sup>19</sup> British Museum,<sup>20</sup> Geneva<sup>21</sup> and the Louvre<sup>22</sup> (Figs. 206-209).

<sup>15</sup> Marvin C. Ross, "Bronze statuettes of Constantine", *DOP* 13, 1959, p. 179-183.

<sup>16</sup> Ross, *op. cit.*, figure 13. *Das Museum für Spätantike und byzantinische Kunst*, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 1992, 101-102, nos. 26a-26h with illustrations.

<sup>17</sup> Ross, *op. cit.*, figure 18.

<sup>18</sup> M.B. Mackeprang, "Eine in Jutland vor 200 Jahren gefundene Kaiserstatuette" *Acta archaeologica* IX, 1938, p.133-151. (This statuette, not reproduced by Ross, is unknown to me.)

<sup>19</sup> *Splendeur de Byzance*, Br. 1, with bibliography.

For our present purpose, possibly the most important objects dating from this period are two reliquaries, one found in Isauria and the other at Iabalkovo in the Haskovo district of Bulgaria.<sup>23</sup> The latter, which is fully described and illustrated by the two Bulgarian scholars cited here, is small (4.8 x 3.0 x 2.8 cm). The sides are decorated with the figures of Christ and the Apostles. What, however, is of special interest is the representation on the lid of a Cross (Fig. 210). Above its transversal arm is an inscription in Greek OMONOIA. Below the transversal arm are two bust figures facing each other; the one on the left is a man while the one on the right is a woman. No inscription accompanies them. However, reasonably enough, the authors take for granted that they are Constantine and Helena. They date the reliquary to the second half of the fourth century. The other reliquary found in Isauria, of which they provide only a drawing, is decorated with the same figures either side of the Cross, but, instead of an inscription, there are two doves above the transversal arm (Fig. 211). Although there is no certitude as to the date of these reliquaries and the identification of the two figures is hypothetical, it may be that these are the earliest extant examples of what would become the standard iconographical type of Constantine standing with Helena on each side of the Cross.

The literary sources provide evidence that there was a number of such representations of the Emperor and his mother in Constantinople, but, of course, none of them have survived. They took their place among the *spolia*, the numerous pagan statues brought to the capital from temples throughout the Empire. As Eusebius wrote, Constantine himself initiated this way of embellishing his new capital.<sup>24</sup>

Spoliation continued under his successors, so that, for example, by the late fifth century a collection of eighty-one antique statues had been

<sup>20</sup> *Byzantium*, n° 110. Liz James, "Who's That Girl? Personifications of the Byzantine Empress", *Through a Glass Brightly (Festschrift David Buckton)*, edited by Chris Entwistle, Oxford 2003, p. 51-56.

<sup>21</sup> Collection George Ortiz: *Splendeur de Byzance*, Br. 2, with bibliography.

<sup>22</sup> *Byzance*, n° 70, with bibliography.

<sup>23</sup> Ovcarov and Vaklinova, *Rannovizantiyski pametnici*, p. 58-59, plate 124.

<sup>24</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, III 54, p.143-144; Commentary, p. 311-312, where it is noted that "the extent to which he (Constantine) actually despoiled or demolished pagan temples is difficult to establish".

gathered in the Baths of Zeuxippos.<sup>25</sup> The most detailed account of the artefacts which once existed in Constantinople is the *Parastaseis*.<sup>26</sup> Its editors date it to the first decades of the eighth century. The information given in this text is often implausible as well as being difficult or impossible to control. For example, were there really at one time in Saint Sophia 427 statues, of which only eighty were Christian?<sup>27</sup> Occasionally its statements can be controlled from other sources. Thus it is known independently that there was a colossal statue of Constantine in the Forum.<sup>28</sup> Equally for the *Milion*,<sup>29</sup> there are other sources which corroborate what is recounted in the *Parastaseis*.<sup>30</sup> Marking the official centre of the city, it had the form of a double triumphal arch surmounted by a column. However it is unlikely that there were statues of Constantine and Helena holding a Cross on top of it at this early date. It is more plausible that this iconographical type was only created during the reign of Constantine VII (913-957) and Helena.<sup>31</sup> There is no mention of the representations of ecumenical councils which were certainly there by 712.<sup>32</sup> The text is particularly important for the interest which it shows in portrayals of Constantine and Helena and of other members of the imperial family, including the Emperor's wife Fausta and his sons. The text also implies that there existed pictures of Constantine's visions or dreams. Besides the well authenticated one before the Battle of the

<sup>25</sup> Jai Elsner, "From the Culture of Spolia to the Cult of Relics: The Arch of Constantine and the Genesis of Late Antique Forms", *Papers of the British School at Rome* LXVIII, 2000, p. 155. Elsner points out that this kind of spoliation differed from that practised for the Arch, since these were free standing sculptures. They were not integrated into the structure of monuments.

<sup>26</sup> *Constantinople in the Early Eighth Century. The Parastaseis syntomai chronikai*, edited Avril Cameron and Judith Herrin, Leiden 1984.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 46, 71-73.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 151. G. Dagron, *Naissance d'une capitale*, plate IV.

<sup>29</sup> *Constantinople in the Early Eighth Century*, *op. cit.*, p. 94-95.

<sup>30</sup> R. Janin, *Constantinople byzantine*, Paris 1964, p. 103; A. Prolow, *Les reliquaires de la Vraie Croix*, Paris 1965, p. 223-225; "Patria Konstantinopolis", edited by Th. Preger, *Scriptores rerum constantinopolitinarum*, Leipzig 1907.

<sup>31</sup> *Constantinople in the Early Eighth Century. The Parastaseis syntomai chronikai*, *op. cit.*, p. 94-95.

<sup>32</sup> *Vid. infra*. The Emperor Constantine I and the First Council of Nicaea; Walter G. S. 20-21.

Milvian Bridge, of which representations are known, he would have had two others, one on the Danube and the other – a Cross in the sky – just outside the city gates.<sup>33</sup> If the second and third visions were represented pictorially, no example of them has survived.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CROSS IN CONSTANTINE'S ICONOGRAPHY

The Cross was probably the most frequently represented object in Christian iconography from the earliest times.<sup>34</sup> However, before Constantine its significance was normally theological. With Constantine's vision and the words accompanying it (τοῦτο νικά), the Cross acquired a political significance in peace but more particularly in war when a Cross or *labarum* was carried at the head of the imperial troops. Eusebius calls the Cross elevated in Rome a "saving sign" (σῆματιον), with obvious military connotations.<sup>35</sup> When Eusebius writes of the Cross in Constantine's vision, he uses the word "trophy" (τρόπαιον).<sup>36</sup>

<sup>33</sup> *Constantinople in the Early Eighth Century. The Parastaseis syntomai chronikai*, *op. cit.*, editors' commentary, p. 271.

<sup>34</sup> For general but detailed accounts, *vid. Erich and Erika Dinkler*, "Kreuz I (vorikonoklastisch)", *Reallexikon für byzantinische Kunst* V (1991), 1-219; G. Galavaris, "Kreuz II (nachikonoklastisch)", *ibidem*, 219-284. Holger A. Klein, "Constantine, Helena and the Cult of the True Cross in Constantinople," *Byzance et les reliques du Christ*, edited by J. Durand and B. Flusin, Paris 2004, p. 31-59, while assiduous in its presentation of the veneration of the True Cross, is regrettably cursory in its treatment of Constantine and Helena.

<sup>35</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, I 40, p. 85, with regard to Constantine's statue celebrating his conquest of Rome: "By this salutary sign, the proof of true valour, I liberated your city."

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, I 28, p. 81, "A cross-shaped trophy formed from light, and the text attached to it which said, 'By this conquer!'" *vid. commentary*, p. 207.



The commonly inscribed formula IC XC NI KA, accompanying the Cross was considered by Frolow to be "un simple changement de graphie."<sup>37</sup> An analogous formula may be found in the temple of Philae in Egypt which was converted into a church under Justinian between 535 and 537. Here the Cross is accompanied with the words Ο ΣΤΑΥΡΟΣ ΕΝΙΚΗΘΕΝ ΑΕΙ ΝΙΚΑ.<sup>38</sup> In spite of what Frolow maintained, the practice of abbreviating "Jesus Christ conquers" as IC XC NI KA became so common and so widespread that it is difficult to believe that the standardisation was not deliberate.<sup>39</sup> The question arises when the device (a plain Cross with the letters IC XC NI KA) first came into use. That it derives from Constantine's vision is evident. However, subsequently, while retaining its triumphal significance which was also to become apotropaic, it seems that it lost any explicit connection with him. My earlier research led me to the conclusion that the earliest dateable examples are the four representations in a cistern at Madaba, in which an inscription records that the cistern was renovated thanks to Justinian (527-565).<sup>40</sup>

Other early examples of uncertain date could be cited. However, we come on to certain ground in the reign of the emperor Leo III (717-741) and of his son Constantine V (741-775). For Frolow, the earliest authentic example of the device was an inscription commemorating the restoration of the ramparts of Constantinople in 741/2.<sup>41</sup> He did not know that the two emperors, father and son, introduced the device on the silver *miliaresion* minted after the coronation of Constantine V as co-emperor on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 720, probably for distribution as *largesse*.<sup>42</sup> There is no

<sup>37</sup> Antoine Frolow, "IC XC NI KA", *Byzantinoslavica* 17, 1956, p. 102.

<sup>38</sup> P. Nautin, "La conversion du temple de Philae en église chrétienne", *CahArch* 17, 1967, p. 14, figure 8.

<sup>39</sup> Ch. Walter, "IC XC NI KA. The Apotropaic Function of the Victorious Cross", *REB* 55, 1997, p. 195, reproduced in this volume.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 194-195; Michele Piccirillo, *Chiese e Mosaici di Madaba*, Jerusalem 1989, p. 118. Frolow, *Reliquaires*, p. 109, note 66, was sceptical about the Justinianic date.

<sup>41</sup> Walter, "IC XC NI KA", *op. cit.*, p. 195, note 14.

<sup>42</sup> Cécile Morrisson, *Catalogue des monnaies byzantines de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris 1970, p. 450-451. Leslie Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning in Ninth-Century Byzantium*, Cambridge 1999, p. 154, repeats Frolow's error.

connection between the use of this device on coins and iconoclasm, for it continued to be used by iconophile and iconodule emperors alike at least up till the reign of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (913-959).<sup>43</sup> A possible explanation is that the device was used triumphantly or apotropaically against the Arabs but that its original purpose was forgotten; ultimately it ceased to be used. The *miliaresion* itself was no longer minted after 1080. Other examples are rare. However, one has been registered in Cappadocia in the church of Açıkel Ağa kilisesi (Hasan Dağı, Belisırma), an early church whose date is controversial.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore the device, abundantly decorated, entirely fills two introductory folios in Paris *græc.* 510, f. C, dating from 879 to 882<sup>45</sup> (Fig. 212).

Developments in the iconography of the Cross may be conveniently studied in Cappadocian art, but here they can only be described summarily, in so far as they are relevant to the iconography of Constantine. In some pre-Iconoclast churches, the Cross dominates the apse, as was usual in early church decoration.<sup>46</sup> Such crosses, no doubt triumphal, signified Christ's victory by Crucifixion, Resurrection and the promise of his second Parousia; they were theological in their conception.<sup>47</sup> Four examples may be noted; Güllü Dere n° 5<sup>48</sup> (Fig. 37),

<sup>43</sup> The full details are given in my article "IC XC NI KA. The Apotropaic Function of the Victorious Cross", (reproduced in this volume) following Morrisson. André Grabar, *L'iconoclasme byzantin, dossier archéologique*, Paris 1957, p. 119-129, had already observed that neither iconoclasts nor iconodules used coinage for propaganda purposes against their antagonists.

<sup>44</sup> Catherine Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines de Cappadoce*, Paris 1991, p. 327-329; Nicole Thierry, *La Cappadoce de l'Antiquité au Moyen Âge*, Paris 2003, fiche n° 22. Dating ranges from the end of the seventh to the beginning of the tenth century. Another example has been recorded in the southern vestibule of the church of St Sophia, Novgorod, Georgi Gerov, "L'image de Constantin et Hélène avec la Croix: Étapes de formation et contenu symbolique", *Niš and Byzantium, Zbornik Radova II*, Niš, 2004, p. 238.

<sup>45</sup> Leslie Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, p. 152-157, figures 3, 4.

<sup>46</sup> Christa Ihm, *Die Programme des christlichen Apsismalerei vom vierten Jahrhundert bis zur Mitte des achten Jahrhunderts*, Wiesbaden 1960.

<sup>47</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises Byzantines*, p. 45, 335-336.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 44-46, pl. 36.1.

Karşıbecak (Avcılar),<sup>49</sup> Hagios Stephanos (Cemil),<sup>50</sup> and Kapılı vadişi kilisesi (near Karacaören).<sup>51</sup> No representation of Constantine occurs in any of these churches. Later the absidal Cross was replaced by Christological scenes.

In Cappadocian churches crosses abound, sometimes part of the overall decoration. Whether sculpted,<sup>52</sup> or painted, it is likely that the polemical climate of Iconoclasm encouraged a non-figurative style of decoration. In the church of Hagios Basilios (Mustafapaşa), there is a vast Cross painted on the ceiling<sup>53</sup> (Fig. 38). The only figurative paintings are of two local saintly bishops, Saint Gregory of Nazianzus (identified by an inscription) and probably Saint Basil. There are numerous votive crosses, while in the apse the crosses form part of the decorative programme.<sup>54</sup> The three patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, regularly invoked in the liturgy,<sup>55</sup> each have their name inscribed beside a cross. Below them – the really important detail for this study – is another cross accompanied by an inscription ΣΗΓΝΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΚΩΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥ<sup>56</sup> (Figs. 213–214). There are other inscriptions in the church. One, which runs around the large cross in the ceiling, attributes the decoration to the donor Nicander and the priest Constantine and relates that its principal theme is

an image of the Holy Wood.<sup>57</sup> Another inscription has been interpreted by Jean Gouillard as meaning that (when) one represents (the cross), Jesus Christ is not tarnished.<sup>58</sup> There have been many conjectures about this church, whose exact date remains controversial.<sup>59</sup> However, whether it dates from the actual period of Iconoclasm or later, the Cross with Constantine's name beside it and the accompanying inscription is the earliest surviving example of the emperor occupying a central position in the apse of a church.<sup>60</sup> The word ΣΗΓΝΟΝ recalls the expression used by Eusebius, for the Cross in Constantine's vision, "the saving sign".<sup>61</sup> In other words his political triumph is being adapted to a theological context. He is being incorporated into the hierarchy of saints. If the founder, Nicander, was a soldier the "sign" would for him have been associated with military triumph. It is therefore unlikely that, as is sometimes suggested,<sup>62</sup> the church was originally dedicated to Saint Constantine. If so, it would, again, be the earliest example of such a dedication. Nicole Thierry calls the abundance of crosses in the church of the stylite Nicetas (Üzümlü Kilise, Kızıl Çukur) *stavromanie*.<sup>63</sup> However, in the period after Iconoclasm their number diminished. They were replaced by Christological scenes and portraits of saints, notably Constantine and Helena. When the Cross was represented, it was, apart from scenes of the Crucifixion, normally in their company.

Kazhdan was primarily concerned with Constantine as a political figure.<sup>64</sup> No doubt he is correct in supposing that Byzantine interest in Constantine as such declines, while their interest in his sanctity increased enormously. It is possible to make a distinction in semantics between Constantine's political Cross as a "saving sign" and the theological Cross

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 70–71, pl. 53.1–2.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 161–163, pl. 100.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 171–173, pls. 11, 104–105.

<sup>52</sup> Nicole Thierry, *La Cappadoce*, p. 102–103.

<sup>53</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 185, plate 114; Eadem, *La Cappadoce médiévale*, Paris (no date), p. 34, plate 8; Thierry, *Cappadoce*, fiche 19, plate 47. Other vast crosses are painted on the ceiling of Ağaç altı kilise, Thierry, *Cappadoce*, fiche 23, plate 54 (eighth or early ninth century), also of Kokar kilise, Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 302–303; Thierry, *Cappadoce*, fiche 33, plate 59 (950–1000?).

<sup>54</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 184–186, plate 115, figure 1; Eadem, *La Cappadoce médiévale*, p. 38–39; *vid.* also, G. de Jerphanion, *Une nouvelle province de l'art byzantin. Les églises rupestres de Cappadoce*, Paris 1923–1942, II, p. 105–111; Thierry, *La Cappadoce*, fiche 19. The date is controversial, but de Jerphanion's dating to the iconoclast period (eighth or ninth century) is probable.

<sup>55</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines*, note 144, p. 185, note 46, citing E. Calbrot, *DACL* I, 121–124.

<sup>56</sup> Thierry, *La Cappadoce*, fiche 19.

<sup>57</sup> Eadem, p. 136.

<sup>58</sup> Eadem, fiche 19.

<sup>59</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 186.

<sup>60</sup> Illustrated, Eadem, *Les églises byzantines*, plate 112, figure 1; *La Cappadoce Médiévale*, p. 39; Thierry, *La Cappadoce*, fiche 19, p. 137, figure 90.

<sup>61</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, I 31–32, p. 81–82.

<sup>62</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 184; Thierry, fiche 19.

<sup>63</sup> Thierry, *La Cappadoce*, p. 135 (about 700?); Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 56; Thierry, fiche 16.

<sup>64</sup> A. Kazhdan, "Constantin imaginaire. Byzantine Legends of the Ninth Century about Constantine the Great", *Byzantion* 57, 1987, p. 200–250.

as an emblem of salvation.<sup>65</sup> In iconography this distinction is more tenuous, for the iconographical theme may derive from an assimilation of the two. Kazhdan's relative indifference to hagiographical texts is compensated in part by Teteratnikov's important article,<sup>66</sup> although she does not set development in the context of overall liturgical and hagiographical standardisation such as occurred in the tenth and eleventh centuries. I was concerned with this when studying the iconography of bishops,<sup>67</sup> although a different approach is required when studying the integration of Constantine and Helena into the hierarchy of saints. During this period, *Typika* or liturgical calendars, *Menologia* or *Synaxaria* and collections like the *Metaphrastic Lives* were compiled, in which Constantine and Helena were included. The fact that they were compilations means that they incorporate material of earlier, often uncertain, date. The *Typikon* of Saint Sophia is the one which has been published in the most scholarly manner.<sup>68</sup> The *Menologion of Basil II*, which is only partly illuminated, dates from about 1000. The *Sirmondianus*<sup>69</sup> is a late manuscript chosen by the Bollandists on account of its completeness and because it was in their possession. However, Delehayne in his introduction describes earlier manuscripts of *Synaxaria*, including references to them in the notes which accompany his text.

<sup>65</sup> A good summary of the variants in the significance and iconography of the Cross is given by Leslie Brubaker, "To legitimize an emperor: Constantine and visual authority in the eighth and ninth centuries", *New Constantines: the Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, edited Paul Magdalino, Aldershot 1994, p. 139-141.

<sup>66</sup> Natalia Teteratnikov, "The True Cross Flanked by Constantine and Helena. A Study in the Light of the Post-Iconoclastic Re-Evaluation of the Cross", *DChAH*, Series IV, Vol. 18, 1995, p. 169-188.

<sup>67</sup> Christopher Walter, *Art and Ritual of the Byzantine Church*, London 1982.

<sup>68</sup> *Le Typikon de la Grande Eglise*, edited J. Mateos, I. Le cycle des douze mois, Rome 1962; II. Le cycle des fêtes mobiles, Rome 1963. Other earlier *Typika*, probably dating from the tenth century, Jerusalem Holy Cross 40 and Patmos 266, have not been published in the same scholarly manner.

<sup>69</sup> *Synaxarium ecclesiae constantinopolitanae*, edited H. Delehayne, *Acta sanctorum, Proslogium novembris*, Brussels 1902.

The earliest hagiographical *Life* of Constantine is a fragment in a palimpsest dated about 800.<sup>70</sup> However, there are a number of others. Halkin counted twenty-five *Lives* and panegyrics dedicated to Constantine.<sup>71</sup> Kazhdan wrote strangely that after the tenth century "live interest in Constantine died out, and he became a revered personality of an irrelevant antiquarian past".<sup>72</sup> In fact the "live interest" in Constantine was largely transferred from the statesman to the saint. For the purpose of an iconographical study it is not necessary to examine all the literary sources in detail. One passage from the *Menologion of Basil II* will suffice to show how he was presented as a saint: "Constantine the Great and first emperor of the Christians sometimes engaged in war, at Rome against Maxentius before he became emperor and, as others maintain, against the Scythians on the Danube. When confronted with large forces of the enemy, some, fearful at heart, doubted the outcome. But at night seeing the precious cross in the sky with this inscription among the stars: 'Constantine, in this you conquer', he fabricated a similar cross and conquered his enemies. When he was baptised with his mother Helena, he wished to find the precious cross on which the Lord was crucified. Travelling to Jerusalem, his mother found it, revealed to her by Cyriacus, later a bishop. When the entire people saw it they were overcome with exceeding joy. The empress with the senate adored it and kissed it. The people were consumed with extreme desire to venerate it. But this was not permitted on account of the innumerable crowd of men. They could only gaze on it. When they saw it they broke into a shout: *Kyrie eleison*". This text was composed for the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross,

<sup>70</sup> Friedhelm Winkelmann, "Die vormetaphrastischen griechischen hagiographischen Vitae Constantinae Magni", *Actes du XIIe Congrès international d'études byzantines*, Belgrade 1964, p. 408, note 17.

<sup>71</sup> François Halkin, "Une nouvelle vie de Constantin dans un légendaire de Patmos", *Analecta Bollandiana* 77, 1959, p. 70, note 8; Kazhdan, *Constantin imaginaire*, p. 200-201. The *Bibliographica hagiographica graeca* gives a list of them, 361x-369k. Friedhelm Winkelmann, "Die hagiographische Bild Konstantins I. in mittelbyzantinischer Zeit", *Beiträge zur byzantinischen Geschichte im 9.-11. Jahrhundert*, edited Vladimír Vavřínek, Prague 1978, p. 179-203. Unfortunately no illuminated manuscript of *Metaphrastic Lives* containing a portrait of Constantine is known.

<sup>72</sup> Kazhdan, *Constantin imaginaire*, p. 249.



September 14th. It is interesting that Constantine and Helena were introduced into it. There are late Cretan representations of the Exaltation in which they figure. These will be described later.<sup>73</sup>

The feast of Saints Constantine and Helena was celebrated on the anniversary of Constantine's death. The exact date of the introduction of the commemoration of his death is not known. However, a chapel was dedicated to them in the palace of Bonu, where the eucharistic liturgy was celebrated and a relic of the True Cross was venerated. It was mentioned in the Syriac liturgical calendar in the seventh century. We can be certain that it was commemorated in Constantinople in the early ninth century, when the Patriarch Methodios (843-847) composed chants for its liturgy. These were continued by Leo VI the Wise (886-912).<sup>74</sup>

If we return to Constantine and Helena in Cappadocia, it must be noted that for Jolivet-Lévy and Thierry they were not of primary importance in their studies. Nevertheless, in her latest study, Jolivet-Lévy provides a short but exact account of their place in Cappadocian art.<sup>75</sup> The primary iconographical type, which does not seem to exist outside Cappadocia, portrays them with their arms raised, holding up a medallion containing a cross. The earliest example is probably that in Yüksekli kilise n° 1, dating from after 850.<sup>76</sup> Then come the examples in the Holy Apostles, Sinasos (Mustafapaşa) placed near the apse, interpreted by Jolivet-Lévy as being at once a theophany and apotropaic<sup>77</sup> (Figs. 215-216), and in Yılanlı kilise at Yeşilköy (İhlara)<sup>78</sup> (Fig. 39). Of about the same date is the representation in the porch of the church of Güllü Dere n° 4 (Saint John, formerly Ayvalı kilise).<sup>79</sup> They figure again on the east wall of the south chapel of this church, but this time only Constantine is

upholding the medallion with a cross.<sup>80</sup> Two other examples should be adduced. One, dating from about 950, is at the entry to the north apse of Elevra n° 3 (Mustafapaşa), where they are placed at the entry to the apse.<sup>81</sup> The other, much later, probably dating from the XIIIth century, is in the monastery of the Archangel Michael (Cemil), again in the arch before the apse.<sup>82</sup>

The representation of Constantine and Helena together holding up a medallion containing the cross disappears. Variants of this iconography are introduced. Examples may be found in the two churches of Göreme n° 7. In Tokalı I, dating from the first quarter of the tenth century, Constantine and Helena are portrayed on the wall in a series of saints (Fig. 40). They hold between them a large cross whose transversal bar, as well as the upper and lower ends, are ornamented with serifs (known as *potencé*, shaped like a T). It is probably the earliest example of this iconographical type.<sup>83</sup> In Tokalı II, dating from 950-960, Constantine and Helena are placed in the arch at the entrance to the apse<sup>84</sup> (Figs. 41-42). This time Constantine holds a cross, while Helena is represented Orans.<sup>85</sup> In Göreme n° 1, El Nazar, they are placed in the West arm on the North side of the vault, near the Transfiguration and opposite the Baptism (Fig. 45). Here they hold a small, symbolic cross between them.<sup>86</sup> The programme of the Pigeon-House (Kuşluk) of Çavuşin has rightly

<sup>70</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 40.

<sup>81</sup> *Eadem*, p. 188, p. 158, note 16. It is a plausible conjecture that the iconographical type was invented for Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (913-957) and his wife Helena. Its emergence in Cappadocia would be consonant with Constantine VII's close relations with the Phocas family, whose artistic patronage in Cappadocia is well attested. This conjecture was inspired by Andreas Schmink's article "Hosios Loukas eine kaiserliche Stiftung?", *The Empire in Crisis? Byzantium in the XIth Century (1025-1081)*, International Symposium II, edited by Βασίλειος Βλασιδίου, Athens 2003, p. 349-380.

<sup>82</sup> *Eadem*, p. 158.

<sup>83</sup> *Eadem*, p. 96; *Cappadoce médiévale*, schema of the church, p. 281.

<sup>84</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 106-108.

<sup>85</sup> *Eadem*, p. 106, plate 7, figure 1; Jolivet-Lévy, *Cappadoce médiévale*, p. 131, plate 30.

<sup>86</sup> Thierry, *La Cappadoce*, fiche 29, plate 68; plan, Jolivet-Lévy, *Cappadoce médiévale*, p. 288. (In her earlier book, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 84, Jolivet-Lévy's description is inaccurate.)

<sup>73</sup> *Vid. inf.*, Biographical Cycles of Constantine in Cretan Art.

<sup>74</sup> *Anthologia graeca communium christianorum* edited W. Christ and M. Paranikas, Leipzig 1871, p. 99.

<sup>75</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *La Cappadoce médiévale*, Paris (no date), p. 384-385.

<sup>76</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 236.

<sup>77</sup> *Eadem*, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 181, plate 110, figure 1; *Eadem*, *La Cappadoce médiévale*, p. 158, figure, p. 95.

<sup>78</sup> *Eadem*, p. 317-320.

<sup>79</sup> *Eadem*, p. 37; N. Thierry, *La Cappadoce de l'Antiquité au Moyen Age*, Paris 2002, fiche 24.



attracted the interest of art historians, in spite of the relative inferiority of its painters to those of Tokalı II. Jolivet-Lévy wrote that it was manifestly destined to glorify the heroes of the victorious campaigns of Nicephoros II Phocas (963-969) against the Arabs.<sup>87</sup> Personally I attributed great importance to this programme in my study of warrior saints.<sup>88</sup> There is no need to elaborate the full programme here, since this has already been done a number of times.<sup>89</sup> Our present concern is the place in it of Constantine and Helena (Fig. 217). They are well described by Jolivet-Lévy.<sup>90</sup> They stand in the apse, holding what may be a reliquary of the cross, on the north side of the apse, counter-balancing Nicephoros and Theophano, the reigning sovereigns, on the south side<sup>91</sup> (Figs. 219-220). Jolivet-Lévy explains their presence as the assimilation of the reigning emperors to the sanctified sovereigns. In fact, Nicephoros may be interpreted as a New Constantine, a term which came into use particularly at and after the second Council of Nicaea. The date of the paintings can be fixed with exactitude to the reign of Nicephoros II Phocas (963-969), perhaps even more precisely to 964-965, when the imperial family was residing in Cappadocia.<sup>92</sup>

In the church with one nave at Erdemli, dating from the second half of the Xth century, Constantine and Helena are also portrayed standing in the apse.<sup>93</sup> In Bahattin Samanlıgil kilisesi at Belisırma, possibly dedicated to Saint Constantine, an icon-like portrait of him is placed in the southern niche of the apse. He holds a globe in his left hand and in his uplifted right hand a cross. Helena, separated from him, is placed more modestly elsewhere. This church, like the previous one, probably dates from the second half of the tenth century.<sup>94</sup> They are also represented in the church of Saint Barbara, Soğanlı, dating from 1006 or 1021.

<sup>87</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 174-177.

<sup>88</sup> Walter, *Warrior Saints*, p. 282-283.

<sup>89</sup> Thierry, *La Cappadoce*, fiche 36, with bibliography.

<sup>90</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 18, plate 23, figure 2.

<sup>91</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Cappadoce médiévale*, p. 293 (plan of church).

<sup>92</sup> Eadem, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 22.

<sup>93</sup> Eadem, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 275.

<sup>94</sup> Eadem, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 322.

At Göreme, there are three churches, similarly constructed, which de Jerphanion called *églises à colonnes*.<sup>95</sup> Jolivet-Lévy describes Çanklı kilise briefly in her first book<sup>96</sup>, more extensively in her later one<sup>97</sup>, but most fully in an article.<sup>98</sup> She accepts as the most plausible de Jerphanion's dating to the middle of the XIth century. Constantine and Helena are placed on the West wall of the south arm. In Jolivet-Lévy's illustration, they are visible only at waist level, holding between them a narrow cross. In fact, the whole decorative programme is built up around the Cross, of which, Jolivet-Lévy surmises, there was at one time a relic in the church. It will be necessary to return later to Çanklı kilise for other iconographical features.<sup>99</sup>

In Saint Catherine, Göreme 21, dating from the second half of the XIth century, Saints Constantine and Helena stand together holding a cross between them in the vault of the east arm before the apse<sup>100</sup> (Fig. 44). In Saklı kilise, Göreme n° 2a, also dating from the second half of the XIth century, Constantine and Helena are placed in the central arcade between the two parts of the nave (Figs. 43 and 221-222). Constantine holds a small cross and globe, Helena only a small cross.<sup>101</sup> Yılanlı kilise, Göreme 28, again dating from the second half of the XIth century, has no figurative paintings apart from 'icons' of saints, including Constantine and Helena, in the vault<sup>102</sup> (Fig. 218).

<sup>95</sup> De Jerphanion, *Cappadoce*, I, p. 377-473. Thierry, *La Cappadoce*, fiche 42. The two others, n° 19, Elmalı kilise and n° 23, Karanlı kilise do not concern us here.

<sup>96</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 128-131.

<sup>97</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Cappadoce médiévale*, p. 77, schema p.298.

<sup>98</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, "Une fondation aristocratique à Göreme, Çanklı kilise", *Mystérieuse Cappadoce, Dossiers archéologiques*, n° 283, May 2003, edited N. Thierry, schema, p. 62, text, p. 65, illustration, p. 64.

<sup>99</sup> *Vid. infra*, "New Constantines".

<sup>100</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 126, plate 78.

<sup>101</sup> Eadem, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 85-87, Restle II, figs. 38-40.

<sup>102</sup> Eadem, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 136-137, Restle II, fig. 250. There is a number of small, modest churches in the Göreme region closely resembling Yılanlı kilise, decorated only with portraits of popular saints including Constantine and Helena.

They also figure in other churches, but no description or photographs of them are available, for example in Ak kilise (Akköy n° 3),<sup>103</sup> and Saint George, Açık Saray (near Gülşehir),<sup>104</sup> and in Saint George, Ortaköy,<sup>105</sup> where they are placed under the cupola. Karşı kilise, Gülşehir, is somewhat later (Fig. 46). It can be dated to 1212 by a dedicatory inscription in the apse.<sup>106</sup> Along with other saints on the south side, Constantine and Helena are represented holding a large cross between them, accompanied by a dedicatory inscription.<sup>107</sup> An interesting detail is the presence of acronyms, ΕΕΕΕ, placed to left and right above the transversal arm of the cross. Similar acronyms are inscribed behind a rider in the north-west region of the church.<sup>108</sup> The same acronyms ΕΕΕΕ accompany Constantine and Helena in another XIIIth-century church at Tatlarin.<sup>109</sup> They are common enough beside crosses in Byzantine churches from about 1200, when they appear in the Hermitage of Saint Neophytos, Cyprus.<sup>110</sup> These acronyms have been catalogued systematically for Serbia.<sup>111</sup> At least fifteen variants are known, of which ΕΕΕΕ is the most frequent, recurring on the cross of Constantine and Helena elsewhere, for example at Berende, Bulgaria<sup>112</sup> (Fig. 80). There are six alternative ways of reading it,<sup>113</sup> of which the most usual is

<sup>103</sup> Eadem, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 149-150.

<sup>104</sup> Eadem, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 225-227.

<sup>105</sup> Eadem, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 251-253.

<sup>106</sup> Eadem, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 229-230; Eadem, "Images et espace cultuel à Byzance: l'exemple d'une église de Cappadoce (Karlı kilise, 1212)", *Le sacré et son inscription dans l'espace à Byzance et en Occident, Etudes comparées*, edited by Michel Kaplan, Paris 2001, p. 163-181. Schema of paintings, p. 164, figure 1.

<sup>107</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *art. cit.*, p. 168-169, 171; figure 6.

<sup>108</sup> Ibidem, p. 171; figure 20.

<sup>109</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, "Nouvelles églises à Tatlarin, Cappadoce", *Monuments et Mémoires* 75, 1996, p. 53-54, figure 25.

<sup>110</sup> C. Mango and E.J.W. Hawkins, "The Hermitage of Saint Neophytos", *DOP* 20, 1966, p. 162-163.

<sup>111</sup> Gordana Babić, "Les croix aux cryptogrammes peintes dans les églises serbes des XIIIe et XIVe siècles", *Mélanges Ivan Dujčev, Etudes de civilisation*, edited by Suzy Dufrenne, Paris 1979, p. 1-13.

<sup>112</sup> E. Bakaleva, *Stenopisite na crkvata pri selo Berende*, Sofia 1976, p. 53-54; figure 46, p. 71, where the letters are placed on the central bar of the cross.

<sup>113</sup> Gordana Babić, "Les croix aux cryptogrammes peintes dans les églises serbes de XIIIe et XIVe siècles", *Mélanges Ivan Dujčev, Etudes de civilisation*,

ΕΑΕΝΗ ΕΩΘΕ ΕΑΘΟΥ ΕΓΟΥΡΙΑ is the most usual. Apparently it occurs only twice in Cappadocia, in Karşı kilise and at Tatlarin.<sup>114</sup>

This section devoted to Constantine and the Cross is complex. It was necessary to trace the origins and development in seventh-century representations of the Cross and the associated acronym IC XC NI KA before turning to iconographical themes in which the emperor – and normally the empress – figure with the Cross. The wealth of relevant material in Cappadocia, so exiguously and accurately described by specialists in this field, may seem to receive disproportionate treatment. However, it is in this region that the majority of painted churches of the period have survived. One can only surmise that the same iconographical themes were used in churches which regrettably are no longer extant. It is significant that, in the early representation in Hagios Basilios (Mustafapaşa),<sup>115</sup> Constantine's name is mentioned beside the Cross, although he is not actually portrayed (Figs. 213-214). Attention had to be paid to the literary, notably liturgical, sources to understand the ideological background to the progressive evolution of the iconographical type which became eventually standard when, notably in church decoration, Constantine and Helena exercised primarily an apotropaic function. However, they could also appear with other icons of saints, particularly in the vault.<sup>116</sup>

In all likelihood portraits of Constantine and Helena existed in equally considerable numbers in churches throughout the Byzantine Empire which regrettably are no longer extant. It is our good fortune, not only that so many have survived in Cappadocia but also that they have

edited by Suzy Dufrenne, Paris 1979, p. 211, note 136. The subject is further developed in my article "IC XC NIKA. The Apotropaic Function of the Victorious Cross", reprinted in this volume.

<sup>114</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Images et espace cultuel*, p. 163-181, Schema of paintings, p. 164, figure 1.

<sup>115</sup> N. Thierry, *Cappadoce*, fiche 19, p. 137, figure 90.

<sup>116</sup> Eadem, p. 136-137. There is a number of small, modest churches in the Göreme region, closely resembling Yılanlı kilise, decorated only with portraits of popular saints including Constantine and Helena.



been so exiguously and accurately described by the specialists in this field.

The developments in the iconography of Constantine and Helena in Cappadocia may be summed up as follows: at first Constantine's name without his portrait was inscribed beside a cross. The allusion was no doubt to the Cross in his vision before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. Subsequently, when he is represented with Helena, holding up together a Cross in a mandorla, his mother's presence is justified by her reputed discovery of the True Cross. A standard iconographical type was established, which, with slight variants in detail, continued to be used in late Byzantine and post-Byzantine art. Constantine and Helena, imperially dressed, stand side by side with the cross between them. The variants in this iconographical type will be discussed in the section on reliquaries. In many churches, whose dominant theme is Christological or veneration of the Cross, Constantine and Helena are integrated into the programme. Subsequently they become independent. They are placed in a strategic position in the church, where they exercise an apotropaical function.

## CONSTANTINE AND BASIL I

The role played by the emperor Basil I (867-886) in developing the cult of his illustrious predecessor merits particular attention. Basil I not only extolled Constantine, directly or indirectly, as a cynosure for succeeding emperors, including naturally himself, but also did much to promote his cult as a saint. Both aspects of Basil I's role have been exhaustively studied by Leslie Brubaker,<sup>1</sup> who considers that during his reign the imagery of Constantine and the linked image of the cross were reworked and refined.<sup>2</sup> Consequently this section will depend considerably on her findings.

Basil was socially of low, probably Armenian origin. A certain Nicolas contracted an intimate relationship with him, cemented by an *adelphopoia*.<sup>3</sup> It was probably Nicolas who introduced him into high society where he obtained the position of groom or *strator* in the stables of Theophilites. From there he moved up to the imperial stables. He exercised, apparently, the same fascination on the emperor Michael III (842-867) as he had done on Nicolas. In fact their intimacy was such that Michael III made Basil co-emperor. He murdered his rival, the emperor's uncle the Caesar Bardas. He then murdered Michael III too, one night when he was drunk in his bed-chamber. Thus he became sole emperor.

<sup>1</sup> Leslie Brubaker, "To legitimize an emperor: Constantine and visual authority in the eighth and ninth centuries", *New Constantines: the Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, edited by Paul Magdalino, Aldershot 1994, p. 139-158; *Eadem*, *Vision and Meaning in Ninth-Century Byzantium*, Cambridge 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Brubaker, "To legitimize an emperor", p. 143.

<sup>3</sup> Walter, *Warrior Saints*, p. 288, note 84; George the Monk, *Theophanes Continuatus*, edited I. Bekker, Bonn 1838, p. 820. The fullest account is given by John Boswell, *Same-Sex Unions in pre-Modern Europe*, New York 1994, cited here from the French translation *Les unions du même sexe dans l'Europe antique et médiévale*, Paris 1996, p. 246-249, notes 63-82 (p. 466-468).

He had a son, Constantine, by his first wife Maria. Later he married Michael III's former mistress Eudocia Ingerina, by whom he had three sons, Leo, Alexander and Stephen.<sup>4</sup>

Basil was primarily concerned to consolidate his dynastic position, by crowning his eldest son co-emperor in 869 and, after Constantine's death, his second son in 879. He had to navigate his way through a series of tricky religious and political situations. His indifference to moral considerations, and his enormous capacity for intrigue made it possible for him to rule autocratically with the support of competent agents, among whom may be noted his brother-in-law Christopher and his outstanding general Nicephorus Phocas. Once his dynastic position was consolidated, he exercised his capacity as a lawmaker, at the same time strengthening the constitution. In religious matters he found an excellent helpmate in Photius, whom he demoted at the beginning of his reign but later reinstated as patriarch. His supreme claim to glory was to have been himself addressed by Pope Stephen V (885-891) as The New Constantine.<sup>5</sup>

Photius was probably responsible for the discreet assimilation of Basil I to Constantine in some miniatures in the outstanding illuminated manuscript of the *Homilies* of Gregory of Nazianzus, Paris *græc.* 510, produced between 879 and 882. This manuscript may never have been seen outside the narrow circle surrounding the emperor. However, other signs of Basil's devotion to Constantine were public. His eldest son was addressed as "the New Constantine" until his death in 879. On his death, he was buried in the mausoleum of Constantine. Basil restored the churches of the Holy Apostles and Saint Mokios, both connected with Constantine.<sup>6</sup> He also had Constantine's gold cross carried before him in

<sup>4</sup> George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, English edition 1955, p. 206-207. Curiously, Ostrogorsky manifests no interest in Basil I's promotion of the cult of Constantine.

<sup>5</sup> Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, p. 172.

<sup>6</sup> Brubaker, "To legitimize an emperor", p. 158; *Eadem*, *Vision and Meaning*, p. 172. The main source for Basil's church building or restoration in honour of Constantine is the *Vita Basilii* (= *Theophanes continuatus*), *op. cit.*, note 3; *vid.* Paul Magdalino, "Observations on the *Nea Ecclesia* of Basil I", *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 37, 1987, p. 51-64.

triumphal processions.<sup>7</sup> Photius further obliged him by constructing for him a spurious genealogy.

This is the background to the iconography of Constantine under Basil I. In church decoration there remains only the portrait of Constantine in Saint Sophia, in its rather battered condition, in the room over the vestibule, dating from about 870.<sup>8</sup> Constantine has the beard which will henceforward occur regularly in his portraits. He is associated with the Iconophile champions, the patriarchs Germanos and Nicephoros, which suggests that he had been taken over as a patron of the Iconophiles.<sup>9</sup> By far the most important document for a study of Constantine's iconography under Basil I is the manuscript Paris *græc.* 510, illuminated, as mentioned above, between 879 and 882. However, if, as Brubaker argues, Constantine was present implicitly, notably in the miniatures which introduce the text of the *Homilies*, f. Av-Cv,<sup>10</sup> he is only represented personally in a single miniature, f. 440, a biographical cycle<sup>11</sup> (Fig. 47).

## CONSTANTINE'S BIOGRAPHICAL CYCLES

In my survey of the iconography of saintly bishops, I attempted to distinguish certain categories of biographical scenes and cycles.<sup>12</sup> A full biographical cycle would begin with the person's birth or baptism. It would then extend through the salient features of his life, culminating in his death or burial. Such cycles existed in Antique art.<sup>13</sup> However, they were rarely taken up in Christian art, except for the Theotokos or Saint

<sup>7</sup> Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, p. 199, 238.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 167, figure 86.

<sup>9</sup> R. Cormack and E. Hawkins, "The Mosaics of Saint Sophia at Istanbul: the Rooms above the Southwest Vestibule and Ramp", *DOP* 31, 1977, p. 230-246.

<sup>10</sup> *Vision and Meaning*, p. 147-162.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 163-169.

<sup>12</sup> Ch. Walter, *Art and Ritual*, p. 85-115.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 88, note 12.

John the Baptist.<sup>14</sup> Exceptionally, for Saint Nicolas of Myra nearly thirty examples are known dating from the eleventh to the fifteenth century.<sup>15</sup> Exceptionally also, there are three full biographical cycles in Paris *græce*, 510, one for Saint Gregory of Nazianzus himself, f. 452,<sup>16</sup> another for Saint Basil of Caesarea, f. 104,<sup>17</sup> and yet another for Saint Cyprian of Antioch, f. 332v<sup>18</sup> (Figs. 223-225). More common are anecdotal cycles built up around a significant event in a person's life.<sup>19</sup> Some may be excerpts from a developed cycle, which may still be extant; others may be complete in themselves.

For Constantine only a limited number of cycles have survived. The earliest is evidently the anecdotal cycle on his Arch in Rome<sup>20</sup> (Figs. 169-174). Peirce interpreted it as a continuous narrative: Constantine's departure from Milan, the siege of Verona, the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, Constantine's entry into Rome, an *Adlocutio* and a *Liberalitas*. The cycle recapitulates Constantine's divinely aided rise to power.<sup>21</sup> Peirce did not analyse the scenes; moreover his illustrations are on too small a scale for it to be possible to make out the details clearly.<sup>22</sup> Peirce considered, no doubt rightly, that the focal point of the cycle, was these two last scenes, the *Adlocutio* and the *Liberalitas*; they look forward to the *Temporum felicitas*, which Constantine is initiating.

No other cycle is known for Constantine until that in Gregory's *Homilies*, f. 440; it introduces an extraneous text, the *Metaphrase of Ecclesiastes*, attributed to Gregory Thaumaturgus<sup>23</sup> (Fig. 47). Here the first register portrays Constantine in imperial dress, including a diadem, lying asleep on a couch. To the right are three members of his armed

guard. He was notorious for his dreams and visions with the divine revelations which he received in them.<sup>24</sup> The scene may refer to the dream in which Christ appeared to him, urging him to make a copy of the cross-shaped trophy which he had seen in a vision resting over the sun.<sup>25</sup> In the second register, the Battle of the Milvian Bridge is represented in a very different way from the scene on the Arch. Constantine, again wearing a diadem, charges towards the Milvian Bridge, lancing Maxentius who falls from his horse as his army flees. In the sky, just above the head of Constantine's horse, is the "saving sign" with the inscription EN TOYTO NIKA. The significance of the battle as represented on the Arch, whose decorations include no Christian allusion, is that of a political triumph, while in the miniature its significance is clearly that of the triumph of the Cross.

Constantine does not figure in the lowest register, which is devoted to Helena and the Invention of the Cross. While Constantine is only portrayed in this one miniature, Helena is portrayed a second time, along with Saint Paraskeve, in the miniature on f. 285,<sup>26</sup> the dominant theme of which is the Vision of Habakkuk (Fig. 226). I have twice had occasion to comment on this miniature.<sup>27</sup> My second article, to which I referred in the preceding note, has some relevance to the interpretation of the miniature on f. 440, because the two saints are represented as personifications, Paraskeve of Christ's Passion and Helena, who holds a model of Christ's tomb. Helena is imperially dressed; the model of Christ's tomb alludes to the Invention of the Cross. The subject of the Homily illustrated in this miniature is "On Easter". Unlike so many miniatures in this manuscript, it illustrates directly a phrase in the Homily: "Christ is risen from the dead; rise ye with him".<sup>28</sup> On f. 440, the Invention of the Cross is represented directly. To the left, Helena, imperially dressed, is seated on

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 88, note 13.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 89, note 17.

<sup>16</sup> Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, p. 134-137.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 137-141, figure 17.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 141-144, figure 33.

<sup>19</sup> Walter, *Art and Ritual*, p. 94-97.

<sup>20</sup> Philip Peirce, "The Arch of Constantine: Propaganda and Ideology in Late Roman Art", *Art History* 12.4, December 1989, p. 387-418.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>22</sup> Elsner, *Imperial Rome*, p. 18-19, figure 7, provides an excellent reproduction of the *Adlocutio*, but is mainly concerned with analysing its style.

<sup>23</sup> Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, p. 168, figure 45; PG 10, 987-1018.

<sup>24</sup> The references are numerous in Eusebius, for example, *Letter against polytheistic worship*, II 55, p. 113, "I dread your (God's), power which you have revealed by many tokens, confirming the strength of my faith".

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, 129, p. 81.

<sup>26</sup> Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, p. 284-286, figure 29.

<sup>27</sup> Ch. Walter, "The Iconography of the Prophet Habakkuk", *REB* 47, 1989, p. 251-260, reprinted, *Pictures as Language* XIV; *Idem*, "The portrait of Saint Paraskeve", *Byzantinoslavica* 56, 1995, p. 753-757, reprinted, *ibidem*, XXII.

<sup>28</sup> *Vision and Meaning*, p. 284.



a throne. A legend identifies her as Η ΑΓΙΑ ΕΛΕΝΗ. She faces a group of men, of whom the foremost, in clerical dress, would be Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem, who helped Helena to identify the True Cross. He reappears in the scene to the right, kneeling and reaching towards the Cross in a pit, while Helena, again imperially dressed, is standing, with her hand extended towards it. Another legend identifies the scene: ΕΥΡΕΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΤΙΜΙΟΥ ΣΤΑΥΡΟΥ. In this miniature, there are, strictly speaking, two anecdotal cycles, one for Constantine and one for Helena. However, as Brubaker observed,<sup>29</sup> they were inextricably linked in Byzantine thought, because, by the seventh century, "the history of Constantine almost invariably included an account of Helena and her discovery of the true cross". Moreover, as was evident in the earlier section devoted to Constantine and Helena in Cappadocian painting, they were normally shown together as a pair. This practice continued, as will be observed in the later section about their iconography on reliquaries of the True Cross and other sumptuary objects.

Another cycle in a manuscript in the cathedral library of Vercelli, codex CLXV, includes, besides the scenes directly concerned with Constantine, disparate ones which imply that this series of miniatures also has an ideological import.<sup>30</sup> The manuscript is a collection of canonical documents, preceded by four illuminated folios.<sup>31</sup> It has been dated from the style of the writing to the ninth century. While it is certainly Carolingian, it is likely that the artist who executed the miniatures was inspired by models common to Eastern and Western tradition. On f. 2, the Invention of the Cross is represented, on f. 2v, the First Council of Nicaea, on f. 3, Saints Peter and Paul (Fig. 228). On f. 3v-4, the First Council of Constantinople covers two pages. On f. 4v is the Council of Ephesus. Finally on f. 5, Constantine and Helena are represented adoring Christ in Majesty (Fig. 227). Each miniature is

accompanied by Latin legends in uncials, with the exception of Helena's name on f. 5, which is written in ordinary cursive script. The Invention of the Cross on f. 2 contains two scenes. Below, a figure is excavating the three crosses, traditionally buried together. An inscription explains that Judas is finding the Holy Cross (UBI IUDA [S CRUCE [m] INVE [NIT]). Above, Judas (IUDAS) proffers the Cross to Helena, who wears a diadem and stands in front of a throne; she extends her hands to receive it.<sup>32</sup> On f. 2v, Constantine presides the First Council of Nicaea. This seems to be the earliest extant representation of the Council. Most unusually the Arians are being condemned to burn their books. The usual iconography of the First Council of Nicaea will be discussed in a later chapter. On f. 5, Christ is seated on a throne within a mandorla. To left and right of his nimbus are the letters in cursive script *ih̄s x̄ps* (a fairly clear indication that the artist used a Byzantine model but knew little Greek). Below him stand Constantine and Helena, their arms raised in adoration. There are other indications that the artist was probably inspired by a Byzantine iconographical cycle, of which no early examples are extant but which was certainly copied in late Cretan painting for the Exaltation of the Cross.<sup>33</sup> This will be discussed in the chapter on Constantine in late Cretan painting. Thus this Carolingian manuscript includes among the introductory miniatures what may be reasonably called an anecdotal biographical cycle. However, the whole series, including Saints Peter and Paul and two other ecumenical councils, is clearly intended to call attention to the authenticity of the following texts and the apostolic tradition which inspired them.

There are other anecdotal cycles of Constantine in Western art. For example, the lateral wings of the Stavelot triptych were decorated by XIIIth-century artists, Gaudefroi de Huy, with six episodes from the history of Constantine's conversion and Helena's invention of the True Cross. They were destined to enshrine a Byzantine reliquary of a

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 165.

<sup>30</sup> Walter, "Les dessins Carolingiens dans un manuscrit de Vercelli", *CahArch* 18, 1968, p. 99-107, with bibliography, reprinted, *Pictures as Language* I; *Idem*, *Codices*, p. 50-52.

<sup>31</sup> For the content of the manuscript, "Les dessins carolingiens", p. 99, note 2 (reprinted, p. 1, note 2). It consists mainly of apostolic canons, and those of various councils and synods, as well as papal decretals.

<sup>32</sup> This was a version of the Invention current in the West, *ibidem* (reprint), p. 5, note 7.

<sup>33</sup> *Vid. infra*, Constantine and Helena in Crete, Saint George, Vianoss.

fragment of the True Cross<sup>34</sup> (Figs. 66-67). More outstanding is the series of paintings, executed during the pontificate of pope Innocent IV (1243-1254) in the chapel of Saint Sylvester at the church of the Quattro Coronati. They form, in fact, part of a biographical cycle for Saint Sylvester (Figs. 48-53). This was heavily slanted, for it dates from the period of the Investitures controversy and was intended to proclaim that papal authority was superior to that of emperors. Behind the apocryphal history of Constantine represented here, lies the equally apocryphal *Donation of Constantine*. Constantine's miraculous conversion (which has nothing in common with the version of Eusebius) is followed by Constantine on bended knees before the enthroned pope, on whom he bestows the *frigium*<sup>35</sup> (Fig. 51). In the next scene, Pope Sylvester is entering Rome, wearing his insignia, the pallium and tiara. (Fig. 52). Constantine, wearing a diadem, on foot, walks slightly ahead of the pope, holding his stirrup, the office of *strator* or *marescalcus*.<sup>36</sup> The significance of this office and its representation in papal political imagery has a complex history which does not concern us here.<sup>37</sup> It will suffice to say that a Byzantine would have been mildly surprised to learn that Constantine had acted as *strator*, whether for a pope or a patriarch! Helena is represented in the scene of the Finding and the Miracle of the True Cross. She indicates the true cross, held by a digger above a sitting man in the foreground, just resurrected by the power of the Cross; the other two crosses stand behind him (Fig. 53). A further Western picture in which Constantine figures occurs in a biographical cycle for Saint Sylvester painted by Pesellino (1422-1457). On one panel, now in the Art Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts, the apocryphal miracle of Saint Sylvester restoring a bull to life is represented. To the right of the scene Saint Helena is portrayed in simple feminine dress. To the left, Constantine is enthroned, wearing the characteristic head dress of the

emperor John VIII (1425-1448) with its high conical crown, broad brim and long projecting peak which so fascinated the Italians when he came to the Council of Florence (1437-1439).<sup>38</sup>

Other biographical scenes for Constantine in the Byzantine tradition are rare. However, there is a cycle in the narthex of the church of Saint Nicolas at Banja Pribojska in Serbia, painted about 1570 over earlier decorations which has only been partly uncovered.<sup>39</sup> The later paintings include scenes of Constantine's Vision of the Cross, the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, Constantine's dream (?), Judas discovering and unearthing three crosses, their veneration by Helena (?) and the Baptism of Judas. Unfortunately I have not had access to a detailed description of these scenes.

Two scenes exist in the church of the Holy Cross of Agiasmati at Platanistasa in Cyprus. The dedicatory inscription in the church is open to interpretation, but a date can be inferred from it of about 1500.<sup>40</sup> They form part of a group of related subjects: ten scenes of a cycle of the Invention of the Cross (Fig. 54) and the Exaltation of the Cross with Heraclius<sup>41</sup> (Fig. 55). In one scene, Constantine's Vision of the Cross, he is seated on horseback wearing civil dress and a crown; he is surrounded by his retinue (Fig. 56). All the figures are looking up to a segment of a circle in the sky; one is pointing to it. The segment actually contains no

<sup>34</sup> Ch. Walter, "A Problem Picture of the Emperor John VIII and the Patriarch Joseph", *Byzantinische Forschungen* 10, Amsterdam 1985, reprinted *Pictures as Language* n° X, p. 197-198, figure 1. Other examples of Constantine in later Western painting are listed, *ibidem*, p. 199, note 20.

<sup>35</sup> Vojislav Đurić, "Le nouveau Constantin dans l'art serbe médiéval", *Studien zur byzantinische Kunst und Geschichte, Festschrift für Marcel Restle*, Stuttgart 2001, p. 58, without description or illustration. There is only one detailed study of these paintings by S. Radojević, "Freska Konstantinove pobjede u crkvi Svetog Nikole Dabarskog", *Glasnik Škopskog naučnog društva* XIX, 1938, p. 87-102, which has not been available to me. This information was kindly given to me in a private letter by Branislav Todić, one of whose students is preparing a doctoral dissertation on the church.

<sup>40</sup> Andreas and Judith A. Stylianou, *The Painted Churches of Cyprus. Treasures of Byzantine Art*, new edition, London 1985, p. 186.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 198, 204, figure 113.

<sup>36</sup> Froben, *Les reliquaires*, p. 217. W. Voelke, *The Stavelot Triptych, Mosan Art and the Legend of the True Cross*, New York 1980.

<sup>37</sup> Walter, "Papal Political Imagery in the Medieval Lateran Palace" (part II), *CahArch* 21, 1971, p. 124, figure 25; reprinted, *Prayer and Power*, n° VIIIb.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 124-125, figure 26.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, (part I), *CahArch* 20, 1970, p. 162-169, reprinted, *Prayer and Power*, n° VIIa.

Cross, but stars and a text: EN TOYTΩ NIKΑ.<sup>42</sup> The second scene is of Constantine's Triumphal Entry into Rome (Fig. 57). He has passed through the entry to the city with his retinue. Now all the figures, including Constantine, are in military dress. The emperor, crowned, has a halo; he holds a sword in his hand, while a member of his retinue holds a cross. They are accompanied by an angel holding a sword.<sup>43</sup> Thus the iconography in a number of details differs from that of the same scenes in the cycle on Constantine's Arch.<sup>44</sup>

The most obvious typical scene for a martyr would be his actual martyrdom, like Saint George being tortured on a wheel. For Constantine and Helena the symbolically typical scene which would become rife, was that of them standing either side of a cross.

## APPENDIX

There exist two iconographical themes for Constantine which do not easily fit into this section. In consequence, it seems preferable to record them apart.

### 1. A saint appears to Constantine in a dream

There are two instances; in each case they are recounted and represented in the *Life* of the saint in question, not in that of Constantine. The first concerns Saint Spyridon. When Constantine was lying sick at Antioch, he had a vision of a multitude of bishops, only one of whom was capable of healing him. Various bishops presented themselves, but none corresponded to those whom he saw in his vision, until Saint Spyridon appeared, wearing a rustic cloak and a cap plaited like a basket.<sup>45</sup> He was

<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem*, figure 114, p. 201.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, figure 115.

<sup>44</sup> *Vid. sup.*, "The Art of Constantine's Reign".

<sup>45</sup> P. Van Den Ven, *La Légende de saint Spyridon, évêque de Trimithonte*, Louvain 1953, p. 43.

accompanied by his disciple Triphyllus. Pictures of Saint Spyridon are recorded, of which not all are still extant.<sup>46</sup> However, none are known of him appearing to Constantine in a dream.

It is otherwise with Saint Nicolas, who appeared to Constantine in a dream, ordering him to annul the decree for the execution of three *stratelates* (generals) under pain of the provocation of dire calamities in the Empire.<sup>47</sup> There is a number of representations of this incident; they have been studied exhaustively by Nancy Patterson Ševčenko.<sup>48</sup> Here it is only necessary to resume briefly her text. She remarks that the general formula, which is exceedingly simple, has precedents in Biblical dream scenes, for example of Jacob and Joseph. The gesture of Constantine resting his head on his arm is characteristic of a sleeping or sick person, so distinguishing him from a corpse. There are only minor distinctions in the detail of existing representations: Constantine's costume, the architecture, the addition of palace guards and of candlesticks. The author adduces the analogous representation of Constantine sleeping in Paris *græc.* 510, f. 440.<sup>49</sup> Outside her book, possibly the most accessible reproduction of the scene is on an icon at Mount Sinai dating from the XIth century.<sup>50</sup> She herself reproduces others at Staro Nagorčino, Saint Nicolas Agoriane and Saint Nicolas Orphanos, Thessaloniki. It was noted earlier that Byzantine saints rarely had so many cycles as Nicolas.

### 2. Constantine a warrior on horseback

There was nothing unusual about Constantine being represented on horseback. The statuette of him on horseback dating from his lifetime, now in Vienna, was mentioned earlier as probably deriving from a lost

<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 88-91; Walter, *Art and Ritual*, p. 98, 105.

<sup>47</sup> *Praxis de Stratilates*, various recensions, edited N. Ahnrich, *Der Hagios Nikolaos in der griechischen Kirche*, I, Leipzig/Berlin, 1913, p. 74-75, 91-93.

<sup>48</sup> Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, *The Life of Saint Nicholas in Byzantine Art*, Turin 1983, p. 115-119, with illustrations.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 119, note 13.

<sup>50</sup> G. and M. Sotiriou, *Ikônes du Mont Sinai*, Athens 1956-1958, figure 46, p. 62-63. P. Vokotopoulos, *Byzantine Icons*, Athens 1995, fig. 62, p. 204-205, with a date to the beginning of the 13th century.



monumental statue<sup>51</sup> (Fig. 188). He is represented as a warrior when he figures on horseback in the narthex of the Xth-century church Göreme 11, Saint Eustathius, because he is in the company of Saints Procopius, George and Theodore, also on horseback, all warrior saints.<sup>52</sup>

The representation of Constantine as a warrior saint is rare in Cappadocia and only known elsewhere in some marginal Psalters. In each case, it illustrates Psalm 59(60):4: "You have given a sign (σημαίνεισθαι) to them that fear you that they may flee from the bow." The earliest example is in the Chludov Psalter, f. 58v (IXth century)<sup>53</sup> (Fig. 58). Constantine, wearing a mantle, is seated on a prancing horse; he holds a shield and a lance on top of which is a cross. A fallen figure is trampled by the horse, while two others are aiming arrows from their bows at Constantine (who is named in the accompanying inscription). There is no doubt that the key to the choice of subject is "giving a sign", that is the cross on Constantine's lance. However, the composition as a whole is based on an iconographical type already in use for warrior saints.<sup>54</sup> This iconography was copied with slight modifications for the illustration of the same Psalm verse in the Barberini Psalter, Vat. Graec. 372, f. 100, and the Theodore Psalter, London Add. 19352, f. 75<sup>55</sup> (Figs. 229-230). The figure which Constantine's horse was trampling has been eliminated, while Constantine now wears conventional imperial dress. In the Barberini Psalter the cross on top of his shield is more elaborate; it has two bars on the lower of which is placed the crown of thorns. If this iconographical type was not integrated into Byzantine tradition, it was no doubt because representation of him with Helena and the Cross corresponded more closely to the prevailing conception of him. This will become clear in the following section.

## CONSTANTINE, HELENA AND THE TRUE CROSS ON LUXURY OBJECTS

Besides reliquaries, carved plaques with a representation of the Crucifixion, probably intended for private devotion, are presented here.<sup>1</sup> The outstanding authority on relics of the True Cross was undoubtedly Antoine Frolow.<sup>2</sup> His first book is in fact a catalogue of all the relics of the Cross, authentic or putative, which he was able to trace. No doubt a certain number of them were false, but even so the observation that, if all were put together, there would be sufficient wood to build a battleship may be dismissed as an example of sardonic humour. Frolow's second book on reliquaries of the Cross is unfortunately less lucid and coherent than the first; it also contains some misinterpretations. The book is, nevertheless, a mine of information, which may be supplemented by Jannic and Maximilien Durand's study. For a succinct yet well-documented introduction to the subject, the first chapters of *Le trésor de la Sainte-Chapelle* cannot be surpassed.<sup>3</sup> It is well known that Saint Louis IX (1226-1270) had the Sainte-Chapelle built between 1242 and 1248 in order to contain the relics and their reliquaries which he obtained from the chapel of the Theotokos of the Pharos in the imperial palace at

<sup>1</sup> There is no generic English term for these luxury objects. In French, reliquaries of the Cross are sometimes called *stavrothèques*, for which again there is no English equivalent. I express my enormous gratitude to Jannic Durand, not only for providing me with copies of his own excellent publications on luxury objects but also for his help and advice in private conversation.

<sup>2</sup> A. Frolow, *La relique de la vraie croix*, Paris 1961; *Idem*, *Les reliquaires de la vraie croix*, Paris 1965; Jannic Durand and Maximilien Durand, "À propos du triptyque Harbaville: quelques remarques d'iconographie médio-byzantine", *Patrimoine des Balkans. Voskopojë sans frontières* 2004, edited by Maximilien Durand, Paris 2005, p. 133-155.

<sup>3</sup> *Le trésor de la Sainte-Chapelle*, edited by Jannic Durand, Paris 2001.

<sup>51</sup> Peirce, "The Arch of Constantine", p. 11, note 18, figure 6.

<sup>52</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Eglises byzantines*, p. 113.

<sup>53</sup> Walter, "Latter-day" saints and the image of Christ in ninth-century marginal Psalters", *REB* 45, 1987, p. 209, figure 1; reprinted, *Prayer and Power*, n° X.

<sup>54</sup> *Idem*, *Warrior Saints*, p. 33-38.

<sup>55</sup> *Idem*, "Latter-day" saints in the model for the London and Barberini Psalters", *REB* 46, 1988, p. 216, figure 11; reprinted *Prayer and Power*, n° XI.

Constantinople. Much Byzantine sumptuary art was, as it were, plundered, brought to the West in the thirteenth century, where it found its place in the long run in cathedral treasures and museums. It is equally well known that most of the reliquaries in the Sainte-Chapelle were melted down for the value of their metal at the time of the Revolution, although, surprisingly, the relics were not destroyed. At least one reliquary is known from an engraving while another is known from drawings made before their destruction. The dating of reliquaries is often controversial, but, like the ivory plaques with a similar iconography, most were probably made between the tenth and the twelfth century. Often they have undergone changes, like the Stavelot triptych, mentioned above, which was surrounded by a Western artist with a biographical cycle of Constantine (Figs. 66-67). On all the sumptuary objects which are presented here, the Cross is central. However, there is no uniformity as to the position of Helena and Constantine, when they are present, relative to the Cross. The information available about these objects varies from one to another. It seems best to present them individually, first reliquaries then plaques, as far as possible in chronological order.

## 1. RELIQUARIES

These were made mainly in silver-gilt and enamel, rarely in ivory or stéatite.

### The ivory plaque in the church of San Francesco, Cortona

It is one of the earliest<sup>4</sup> (Fig. 232). On the reverse, is a long inscription in the name of Stephen, *skévophylax* of Saint Sophia and the emperor Nicephoros (probably Nicephoros II Phocas, 963-969). At the top is a bust of Christ between two others of angels. The relic is placed within the cross at the centre of its obverse side. Above and below the single

transversal arm are the Theotokos, Saint John the Baptist, Saint Stephen and Saint John Theologos. Below the cross are three more clipeate images portraying Helena in the centre, pointing towards Constantine in the central clipea holding a cross-shaped sceptre; both are imperially dressed. The third clipea on the right portrays Saint Longinus holding a martyr's cross.<sup>5</sup> All the figures are identified by an inscription.

### The lost reliquary of the monk Timothy

This reliquary, formerly in the Abbey of Mont-Saint-Germain,<sup>6</sup> was known partially to Frolov from the brief description of it by Charles Du Cange, who gave its measurements as 54 X 12 cm.<sup>7</sup> (Fig. 231). It was consequently one of the largest reliquaries known, surpassing even the celebrated one at Limburg. It would have been brought directly from Constantinople to the Abbey of Mont-Saint-Germain in the XIIIth century. It was no doubt melted down, like those in the Sainte-Chapelle, at the time of the French Revolution in order to obtain the precious metal. Jannic Durand, unlike Frolov, had the advantage of knowing the series of drawings of the reliquary in the *Bibliothèque nationale*, lat. 12692, f. 307, 307v, 313v-314 and fr. 9500, f. 46, 46v, 48v.<sup>8</sup> The two-page drawing on lat. 12692, f. 314-315v not only displays the whole obverse of the reliquary but also gives the names of the persons represented. The cross was three-barred with clipeate images of Constantine and Helena under the lowest bar which was, as it were, a footrest. Either side of them under the central bar was a smaller three-barred cross, each destined to contain relics. They are associated, as would be the case in later wall paintings,

<sup>4</sup> This portrait of Longinus is exceptional. It was unknown to me when I wrote in *The Warrior Saints*, p. 226, that he figured only in Christological iconography.

<sup>5</sup> Jannic Durand, "Le reliquaire byzantin du moine Timothée à l'Abbaye du Mont-Saint-Quentin", *Études d'histoire de l'art offertes à Jacques Thirion des premiers temps chrétiens au XXe siècle* edited by Alain Erlande-Brandenburg and Jean-Michel Leniaud, Paris 2001, p. 51-69.

<sup>7</sup> Frolov, *La relique*, n° 473; *Idem*, several references in *Reliquaires*.

<sup>8</sup> Durand, *art. cit.*, figures 1-6.

<sup>6</sup> Frolov, *Reliquaires*, p. 239-241; Natalia Teteriatnikov, "The True Cross Flanked by Constantine and Helena", *DChAH*, Series IV, Vol. 18, 1995, p. 182, figure 13; Durand, *art. cit.*, note 59, p. 139-140, plate XXVI, is the best presentation.

with Saints Peter and Paul. For further details, the reader is referred to Jannic Durand's article.

### The Khakuli triptych

It is not clear whether, in fact, this triptych actually did contain a relic of the True Cross<sup>9</sup> (Fig. 59). It is an exceptionally luxurious object which since 1146 has contained 118 plaques. The central part has five figurative plaques each one surrounded with pearls. At the top is Christ enthroned, below him the *Hetoimasia*,<sup>10</sup> and below this Constantine and Helena imperially dressed and accompanied by an inscription. Each stands on a footstool, holding the end of the single transversal arm of the cross. On the same plaque are busts of four prophets, Elisha (?), Isaiah, Elias and Daniel. To their left and right are the fourth and fifth plaques with busts of the Gospel writers, John and Matthew.

### The Nonantola reliquary

This reliquary in the treasury of the abbey at Nonantola measures 27 X 15 centimetres.<sup>11</sup> It dates from the XIth or XIIth century. The recess for the relic is in the form of a cross with two transversal arms. Four angels are placed above and below the upper arm. In the centre of the lower arm is an enamel *Hetoimasia*. At the lowest level, either side of the raised

<sup>9</sup> National Museum of Fine Arts, Tbilisi, Georgia. Shalva Amiranashvili, *Medieval Georgian Enamels*, New York, no date (ca 1970), p. 105; *Orfèverie géorgienne*, Exhibition catalogue by T. Sanikidzé and G. Abramishvili, Musée d'Art and d'Histoire, Geneva 1979. The object is more likely, in fact, to be Byzantine than Georgian. Frolow, *Reliquaires*, n° 165, p. 217, figure 30, has entirely misunderstood it.

<sup>10</sup> For the *Hetoimasia* see Th. von Bogyay, "Zur Geschichte der Hetoimasie", *Communication, XIth International Byzantine Congress*, Munich 1956, p. 58-31; *Idem*, "Hetoimasia", *RBK* II, 1198.

<sup>11</sup> *Byzantine Art*, Catalogue, ninth exhibition of the Council of Europe, Athens 1964, n° 516; Frolow, *Reliquaires*, n° 412, p. 217; Teteriatnikov, p. 176, figure 8. The *thorakion* was a decoration of the costume of an empress.

base, stand Constantine to the left and Helena to the right both in imperial dress. Helena has a cross with two transversal arms ornamenting her *thorakion*. Constantine holds a sceptre with two transversal arms at the summit in his right hand, while Helena holds an unadorned sceptre in her left hand. They are accompanied by inscriptions. The frame was probably added in the seventeenth century.

### The twelfth century reliquary at Brescia

According to the catalogue cited about the Nonantola reliquary, the one in Brescia resembles it closely<sup>12</sup> (Fig. 234). No further information about it is available.

### The Jaucourt reliquary in the Louvre, Paris

This silver gilt reliquary, measuring 27.4 X 38 centimetres, dates from the XIth or XIIth century<sup>13</sup> (Figs. 62 and 236). Exceptionally it still has the sliding door which covered and protected the relic inside. It belonged to Marguerite d'Arc, Dame de Jaucourt who died in 1389. She had it mounted, probably by a local goldsmith. It passed to the treasury of the church of Jaucourt, where it remained until it was acquired by the Louvre in 1915. Constantine and Helena, cut off at the knees, stand either side of a cross-shaped container with two transversal arms; each extends an arm towards the relic. Above them are two angels.

### The reliquary in the Hermitage, Saint Petersburg

This silver gilt reliquary, measuring 29 X 25.5 centimetres, dates from the XIth or XIIth century<sup>14</sup> (Figs. 60-61). It has retained its sliding cover which is decorated with a Crucifixion accompanied by the Theotokos and

<sup>12</sup> Frolow, *Reliquaires*, n° 413, p. 217, figure 53.

<sup>13</sup> *Byzantine Art*, n° 518; *Byzance*, n° 249, p. 335-337 (the best account); Jannic Durand, *L'art byzantin*, Paris 1999, p. 168; *Idem*, "Le reliquaire byzantin," p. 63-64.

<sup>14</sup> Frolow, *La relique*, n° 408, p. 364; A. Bank, *Byzantine Art in the Collections of Soviet Museums*, Leningrad/New York, 1978, pls. 75-76, pp. 310-311; *Catalogue, Sinai, Byzantium, Russia*, London 2000, p. 90, B. 65.



Saint John the Baptist. There are angels above and three clipeate busts of saints below them. The border of the reliquary is decorated with clipeate busts around the *Hetoimasia*. Inside there is a cross-shaped container with two transversal arms. Above the upper arm are two angels. Below the lower arm are Constantine and Helena imperially dressed; Helena's *thorakion* is decorated with a two-armed cross. Both extend a hand towards the container for the relic.

### The Avellano (Pesaro) reliquary

This silver gilt reliquary, measuring 48 X 20 centimetres, is now in Urbino<sup>15</sup> (Fig. 233). Like the reliquary at Nonantola, it has a cross at the centre with two transversal arms. There are two angels in the upper corners, while Constantine and Helena, identified by inscriptions, stand to left and right. The border is ornamented with winding tendrils and medallions containing angels and evangelical symbols.

### Crusader reliquary, Louvre, Paris

This silver gilt reliquary has been omitted from French publications on Byzantine art, no doubt because Latin influence on its style and inscriptions, if not its iconography, is so evident<sup>16</sup> (Fig. 237). It is 15.9 X 9.2 centimetres in size. Inside is a two-armed cross containing two relics of the Cross. On the container above the upper arm of the cross are two busts of angels. Constantine and Helena in imperial dress stand below the lower arm; they extend their hands towards the cross. The inscriptions are partly in Latin, partly in Greek. On the outer rim: HOC EST LIGNUM

<sup>15</sup> *Byzantine Art, Catalogue, op. cit.*, note 67, n° 517; Frolov, *La relique*, n° 411, p. 365; *Idem, Reliquaires*, p. 217, figure 52. Frolov's description differs in some details from that in the catalogue.

<sup>16</sup> Frolov, *Reliquaires*, n° 648, p. 108, 127, figure 55; *The Glory of Byzantium, Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era*, catalogue, edited by Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1997, n° 264, p. 398.

SCE CRUCIS... XPC PEPENDIT... IERUSALEM... +CONSTANTINUS ET HELENA DETULERUNT. On the inside rim: SCS CONSTANTINUS KOCTANTIN... SCA HELENA .... H AFIA EAENI. On the lid at the top is inscribed I (The I is an obvious Latin mistake for Greek H) STAVPOSIS with IC XC, flanking Christ's head, and IHS XPS. The person responsible for the inscriptions not only gives some in Greek and others in Latin but also jumbles the letters of both alphabets. The cross is considered to be XIIIth-century Crusader work, while the container, probably dating from about 1250, could have been made in Sicily.

### Engraving of a reliquary of the True Cross

The case in which the principal relic of the True Cross was brought to the Sainte-Chapelle is known from an engraving in the National Archives in Paris<sup>17</sup> (Fig. 235). It was published by S.J. Morand in 1790, before being melted down for its metal. Its history is known from 1279-1285, when it figures in a list of treasures from Constantinople made for Eudes, Master of the Chapel. At this time the relics had already been extracted from it. It was large, a metre high; a space, almost of the same height, with two transversal arms was intended to contain the relic. Four angels, named in the accompanying inscriptions, were placed around the upper transversal arm. Below the lower transversal arm to left and right were two further containers, shaped as crosses with two transversal arms of unequal size, for relics. Between them and the central space shaped as a cross stand Constantine and Helena on foot stools, imperially dressed and accompanied by inscriptions. It seems to have resembled the Mont-Saint-Germain reliquary which is also lost.

<sup>17</sup> Durand, *Le trésor de la Sainte-Chapelle*, Paris 2001, p. 63-64, Paris 4° L VI, 18.; *Idem, art. cit.*, note 75, p. 105, figure 11.

### The Lentini reliquary

This reliquary, measuring 13.5 x 8.3 centimetres, is now in the archbishop's palace in Syracuse<sup>18</sup> (Fig. 238). It is unusual in that it is made of steatite and still retains its original wooden encasement. The steatite has been cut away at the centre to contain a wooden cross with two transversal arms. Fragments of the True Cross were placed in the lower cross bar at the place where it intersects the main shaft. An angel stands to each side of the upper cross bar. Constantine and Helena, imperially dressed, both stand on foot stools below the lower transversal arms; each holds out an arm to touch the wooden cross.

### The Stavelot triptych

This reliquary, now in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, is considered to have been brought to the West from Constantinople by Wibald de Stavelot between 1155 and 1157<sup>19</sup> (Figs. 66-67). It is closed by two outer wings rather than by a sliding door. Inside, there is a cross with busts of the archangels Gabriel and Michael above, while Constantine and Helena stand below the single transversal arm. Helena's *thorakion* is decorated with a double armed cross.

### The Esztergom reliquary

This reliquary, one of the finest still extant, has long been known but, on account of its relative inaccessibility at Esztergom (formerly Gran) in

Hungary, it has been studied principally from reproductions with hardly avoidable inaccuracies (Figs. 68-69). Fortunately we now have Paul Hetherington's study made directly from the reliquary.<sup>20</sup> It is one of the fullest and most accurate studies of a reliquary available,<sup>21</sup> incorporating not only an examination of its iconography, our particular concern here, but also of the artists' technique. Hetherington does not commit himself to any of the conjectures emitted by previous scholars as to how this unique Byzantine object found its way into the treasury of a Catholic cathedral, the rest of whose items are Western. Whatever the actual date of its execution, the frame would have been added about 1300 when the slots for a sliding door, now lost, would have been suppressed. The first document still extant in which it is mentioned is the cathedral inventory dated 1528. Hetherington describes the reliquary as 'a framed ensemble of silver-gilt and enamel with horizontal bands dividing the field into three unequal zones; central to the design is the outline of a patriarchal cross forming what must have been a shaped recess'. In the uppermost zone are two lamenting angels. In the lowest zones there are two scenes related to the Passion, the *Helkomenos* and the Descent from the Cross. In the central section, Constantine and Helena, identified by inscriptions, stand to left and right of the Cross, both extending an arm towards it. Helena, as often, has a two-armed cross decorating her *thorakion*.<sup>22</sup> Hetherington does not mention the acronyms, *X(chi)* repeated four times above and below the lower transversal bar, which did not, however, escape Frolow's attention.<sup>23</sup> The letters, which also occur on other representations of the Cross, stand for *Χριστός* *Χάριν* *Χριστιανούς* *Χαρίζει*.

<sup>20</sup> Paul Hetherington, "Studying the Byzantine staurothèque at Esztergom", *Through a Glass Brightly* (Festschrift David Buckton), edited by Chris Entwistle, London 2003, p. 82-94 (colour plate on back cover).

<sup>21</sup> Nancy Patterson Ševčenko's study, "The Limburg Stavrothek and its Relics", *Θησαυρα στη μνήμη της Δασκαρίνας Μαρίας*, Athens 1994, p. 289-293, is of the same quality, but Constantine and Helena do not figure on the reliquary.

<sup>22</sup> Hetherington, p. 82, figures 11.1, 11.4, 11.5.

<sup>23</sup> Frolow, *La relique*, n° 340, p. 331-332; *Idem*, *Les reliquaires*, figure 41; Walter, "The Apotropaic Function of the Victorious Cross", *REB* 55, 1997, p. 204, 212, n° 15.

<sup>18</sup> Jannie Durand, "La relique impériale de la Vraie Croix d'après le *Typicon* de Sainte-Sophie et la relique de la Vraie Croix du trésor de Notre-Dame de Paris", *Byzance et les reliques du Christ*, edited by J. Durand and B. Flusin, Paris 2004, p. 98, figure 5. Frolow, *Reliquaires*, n° 347, p. 217. Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, *L. Byzantine Icons in steatite*, Vienna 1985, p. 138-139 n° 46, pl. 28, fig. 46.

<sup>19</sup> Frolow, *ibidem*, n° 347, p. 217; Teteriatnikov, p. 169, figure 1, who attributes the triptych to the tenth century! W. Voelke, *The Stavelot Triptych, Mosan Art and the Legend of the True Cross*, New York 1980, p. 21-22 and figures 6-8; Durand, *art. cit.*, note 75, p. 98, figure 5.

## 2. OTHER MINOR OBJECTS ON WHICH CONSTANTINE AND HELENA ARE PORTRAYED

### Ivory triptych, Staatliche Museen, Berlin

The central panel measures 23.4 X 14.5 centimetres, the side leaves 21.5 X 7 centimetres<sup>24</sup> (Figs. 63-64). It resembles the Borradaile triptych in the British Museum, which is dated to the tenth century.<sup>25</sup> The central panel is entirely occupied by the Crucifixion, with the Theotokos, apostles and other figures. On each side-leaf there are portraits of four saints in two registers. Constantine and Helena, imperially dressed, are portrayed in the lower register side by side, holding between them a cross with two transversal arms. This seems to be the only sumptuary object on which they were represented thus. Subsequently, however, it was to become the standard iconographical type for the emperor and his mother.

### Ivory triptych, Cabinet des médailles, Paris

The triptych measures 25.2 X 28.5 centimetres<sup>26</sup> (Figs. 241-242). The central panel is again dominated by the Crucifixion, but this time there are two angels above the transversal arm to which Christ's arms are fixed, while the Theotokos and Saint John stand to left and right. Two inscriptions beside them contain the phrases in *John* 19, 27: "Mother, there is your son" ... "There is your mother". Above Christ's head is an inscription naming him King of the Jews. Constantine and Helena, very much smaller in scale, stand below the Cross, their heads on a level with Christ's feet. They are imperially dressed and identified by inscriptions. The side leaves are filled with clipeate portraits of saints, five either side. Like the Berlin ivory, this one has been compared with the Borradaile

triptych in the British Museum and dated to the tenth century. Its provenance before entering the Cabinet des médailles about 1839 is unknown.

### Silver cross, Benaki Museum, Athens

This processional cross B 799 measures 51 X 30 cm.<sup>27</sup> (Fig. 65). Both sides are incised with niello and have applied decoration. It came to the Museum from Adrianople (Edirne) and probably dates from the end of the tenth century. On one side the lower and upper clipeate images are of Constantine and Helena, identified by inscriptions (Figs. 239-240). Both are imperially dressed and both hold a small cross in their right hand, normally – but not in their case – the sign of a martyr.<sup>28</sup>

These objects, mostly reliquaries of the True Cross, listed here with Constantine and Helena portrayed on them are only a small number of those which once existed or still exist. Their most common position on the object for the emperor and his mother is standing to the left and right of the Cross, invariably in imperial dress; sometimes Helena's *thorakion* is decorated with a two-armed cross. There are other variations in details. They may be portrayed placing a hand on the edge of the cavity in which the relic was placed; alternatively they may extend a hand towards it or hold a small cross in one hand. On only two reliquaries, probably the earliest, that at Cortona, and the lost reliquary once in the monastery of Mont-Saint-Quentin, are they placed in clipeate images below the Cross. On only one object, the ivory triptych in the Staatliche Museen, Berlin, on which the central subject is the Crucifixion, are they placed side by side holding a long, narrow, obviously symbolic, cross between them (Figs. 63-64). These variations in detail hardly modify the subject's iconographical significance; its connotations have been frequently noted,

<sup>27</sup> *Byzantine Art*, catalogue, *op. cit.*, note 304, n° 513. Laskarina Bouras, *The Cross of Adrianople*, Athens, 1979.

<sup>28</sup> Teteriatnikov, p. 186-187, cites examples of other crosses, particularly in Georgia on which Constantine and Helena are portrayed, but, apart from showing how widespread this practice was, they add little to the present study.

<sup>24</sup> *Byzantine Art*, exhibition catalogue, Athens 1964, n° 80, with reproduction; Teteriatnikov, p. 186, figure 16. *Das Museum für Spätantike und byzantinische Kunst*, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 1992, 222, n° 128 with illustrations.

<sup>25</sup> *Byzantium*, n° 153.

<sup>26</sup> *Byzance*, n° 150, p. 236-237.



both in this study and in those on which it depends. They derive principally from the place of the Cross in the redemptive process and from the apotropaic efficacy of the cross as a "saving sign".

With this section we reach a point where the typical sign for Constantine and Helena has clearly emerged on the ivory triptych in Berlin. Henceforward this representation of them holding between them a symbolical cross would recur regularly both in series of saints in church decorative programmes and in other cycles, such as that in the Pigeon House at Çavuşin, mentioned above in a previous section.<sup>29</sup> It is now time to turn to a quite different aspect of Constantine's iconography, his role in the First Council of Nicaea.

## THE FIRST COUNCIL OF NICAEA AND THE EMPEROR CONSTANTINE I

My doctoral dissertation on the iconography of councils was published over thirty years ago.<sup>1</sup> Since then I have returned to the subject a number of times.<sup>2</sup> In my studies, the emperor's role in councils was not, of course, neglected.<sup>3</sup> However, my primary interest, especially when I was preparing my doctoral dissertation, was to produce an overall ecclesiastical synthesis of the iconography of councils. I shall draw on this study in the following pages, as well as upon my other publications and those of other scholars.<sup>4</sup>

Before investigating the iconography of representations of Constantine at the First Council of Nicaea, it is desirable to establish, in so far as it is possible, what was the significance of this assembly for those who took part in it, notably for the emperor Constantine. It is also desirable to try to form from contemporary evidence some notion of the

<sup>1</sup> Ch. Walter, *L'iconographie des conciles dans la tradition byzantine*, Paris 1970.

<sup>2</sup> "Konzilien" (written in 1977), *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst* III, 1990, p. 738-746; "Le souvenir du II<sup>ème</sup> concile de Nicée dans l'iconographie byzantine", *Nicée II, 787-1987*, edited by F. Boespflug and N. Lossky, Paris 1987, p. 167-182, reprinted *Prayer and Power*, n° VIII; "The icon and the image of Christ: the second Council of Nicaea and Byzantine Tradition", *Sobornost* 19, 1988, p. 23-33, reprinted, *Pictures as Language*, p. 155-165; "Icons of the First Council of Nicaea", *DChAH*, Series IV, Vol. 16, 1991-1992, reprinted, *ibidem*, p. 166-187.

<sup>3</sup> *Vid.* particularly *Iconographie des conciles*, p. 132-135.

<sup>4</sup> Colm Luibhéid's *The Council of Nicaea*, Galway University Press 1982, is considered a standard work; *vid.* also C. Brenneke, "Nicæa II", *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 24, 1994, 429-441; the commentary to Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* by Averil Cameron and Stuart G. Hall is also very useful. Bibliography for the Nicene Creed is given later in note 24. *Vid.* also, most recently, Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy. An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology*, Oxford 2005.

<sup>29</sup> *Vid. sup.*, "The Significance of the Cross in Constantine's Iconography."

character of the outstanding personalities. A major difficulty which has to be faced is the paucity of documentation. Another, almost equally important, difficulty is that subsequent developments in Byzantine ecclesiology led to the reinterpretation of the council's significance. The earliest surviving representations of the First Council of Nicaea derive from such reinterpretation rather than from direct knowledge of the actual event. The Council had a pre-history dating back to apostolic times. It will be recalled that a meeting of the apostles and presbyters was held in Jerusalem in order to decide whether or not Gentile converts should be circumcised and obliged to keep the Law of Moses (*Acts 15.4 et seq.*). Such meetings, commonly known by the name of synod (*σύνδοκος*), were regularly convoked, long before the Christian Church received official imperial recognition, by groups of bishops of specific regions to formulate a common policy for ecclesiastical matters of common interest, notably doctrine and discipline.

No doubt it was naive of Constantine to suppose that the Christian Church, with its already established structures, would be a useful instrument for unifying his vast and inchoate empire. After the death of Licinius in 324, he promulgated decrees putting an end to the persecution of Christians which had continued intermittently under his rival. However, the benefits which he bestowed on Christians were mainly material. His discovery that Christians, far from sharing a common set of doctrines, indulged in disputes among themselves and condemned as heretics those who differed from them in what they believed, was an unpleasant surprise for him. Constantine looked upon Christianity as above all a moral force, enjoining peace and concord among its adherents. Eusebius quotes at length a letter which Constantine addressed to Alexander, bishop of Alexandria and to Arius his presbyter.<sup>5</sup> According to this letter, in Alexandria the clergy "were sparring like juveniles over the highest sacred points of divine doctrine," which were "subjected to disgraceful mockery publicly in the theatres of unbelievers".<sup>6</sup> In his letter Constantine berates the Alexandrians not only

<sup>5</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, II 63-73, p. 115-120; commentary, p. 250-253. Some scholars have suggested that the letter was actually addressed to the bishops who subsequently assembled in Antioch.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, II 62, p. 115.

for their frivolity but also for the triviality of their differences which were "quite unworthy of such controversy". He ticks off Arius for replying when Alexander asked for opinions about "some futile point of dispute". Later in the letter Constantine regrets that "through a few futile verbal quarrels between you, brothers are set against brothers and ... divided in ungodly variance." He is not forcing them to come to agreement on every aspect of "this very silly question whatever it actually is". He only wants the bishops to "restore to the whole people the proper bonds of affection." At no point, whether in his letter or later in his inaugural discourse at the Council,<sup>7</sup> does he specify what was the "futile point of dispute". Eusebius tells us that the letter failed to put an end to controversy in Alexandria, which extended through Egypt and the Thebaid.<sup>8</sup> Constantine therefore "marshalled a legion of God, a "world-wide council," with respectful letters summoning bishops from every place".<sup>9</sup>

It seems, however, that the antecedents of this "world-wide council" were slightly more complex. Early in 325 Ossius of Cordoba assembled a group of fifty-six bishops at Antioch.<sup>10</sup> Constantine suggested that they move to Ancyra, but then changed his mind. Finally they assembled in Nicaea, which was more accessible for those bishops whose sees were in the West. Eusebius no doubt exaggerated in saying that they were gathered from "every nation under heaven", a phrase which he cited from *Acts 2.5*. However, he clearly established an analogy between the Pentecostal assembly and this "world-wide council".<sup>11</sup> The number of bishops present is uncertain, calculations varying from over 250 to over 300, but fixed traditionally as 318, the same number as the servants of Abraham (*Genesis 14.14*). There was an imperial residence at Nicaea with an innermost hall, where all the participants could be

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, III 12, p. 125-126; J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, London 1960 (second edition), p. 211.

<sup>8</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, III 4, p. 122.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, III 6 (1), p. 123, commentary, p. 262-263.

<sup>10</sup> Walter, *Conciles*, p. 132; apparently the only literary source for this assembly is a synodical letter in Syriac, Eusebius, *Life*, commentary, p. 262.

<sup>11</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, III 7, p. 123. The whole proceedings of the council and the aftermath are recounted somewhat laconically in III 4-24, p. 122-131, commentary, p. 256-273.

accommodated. A gold chair was set out for the emperor in the middle of the upper row of seats. Constantine, who was not yet himself a baptised Christian (he called himself the bishop of those outside the Church<sup>12</sup>), addressed the assembly, urging the bishops to bring the causes of division into the open, in order to loosen all shackles of dispute by the laws of peace. Eusebius – and Constantine in the letter which Eusebius cited – only mention one subject of dispute, the date of Easter, upon which no decision was taken. Yet, surely, the principal controversial issue, the subject, both of earlier “futile quarrels” and of discussion at the Council, was whether God the Father had begotten or created Jesus Christ his Son. Probably Constantine, while accepting the tenets of Christianity, had no particular interest in and no profound conviction about what was for him a theological nicety. He may not have detected much difference in meaning between begetting and creating or even have fully grasped the importance of the term *consubstantial* (ὁμοούσιος), introduced to confirm that the Son was not created.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, while on at least one occasion Constantine addressed Arius in violent language,<sup>14</sup> it should be recalled that not only those, who, like Arius, entertained doubts as to whether the Father did indeed beget the Son, after being anathematised were later reinstated, but also that later Constantine himself was actually baptised by an Arian bishop, Eusebius of Nicomedia.<sup>15</sup>

Although so much has been published about the First Council of Nicaea, scholars rarely write a straightforward factual account of Arius and Arianism.<sup>16</sup> For the reasons just given, it seems that, at least in Constantine's lifetime, in spite of anathemas, neither Arius nor his doctrine, nor those who sympathised with him were universally

repudiated. It is not clear when Arius first began to be described as an execrable heresiarch, perhaps as early as the First Council of Constantinople in 381. The Arians had been upheld by the emperor Valens, but after his fall in 378 and the succession of Theodosius I (379–395), an ardent upholder of the Nicene Creed, they lost all political support.<sup>17</sup> In the liturgical celebration of the First Council of Nicaea on May 29<sup>th</sup> Arius was described as “vomiting blasphemies”.<sup>18</sup> Such derogatory language was certainly customary earlier than the first surviving pictorial representation of the Council. It has continued into modern times. Gibbon repeats the standard account of his ignominious death. (His bowels burst in a privy.) Other examples could be cited.<sup>19</sup>

A final subject which should be treated before turning to iconography proper is the Creed, because sometimes its opening phrase is inscribed on a long band held by participants at the Council. Summaries of the Christian faith, local in character, had been used in the first centuries for the catechesis of candidates for baptism.<sup>20</sup> However, in the fourth century a revolution took place. A creed, from being an epitome of Christian doctrine, became a test of orthodoxy. The practice, in fact, probably began when six bishops assembled at Antioch in 268 to try Paul of Samosata.<sup>21</sup> They produced a “statement of faith” which he was asked to sign. The bishops at the synod held at Antioch early in 325 set out their faith in the form of a letter, condemning the teaching of Arius, who had, with his companions, himself drawn up a creed-like summary of their theological position. Three bishops, including Eusebius of Caesarea, who refused to sign the synod's statement of faith were excommunicated.<sup>22</sup> However, it seems that they were all reinstated at the Council of Nicaea. Since the course of events leading to the formulation of the Nicene creed

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, IV 24, p. 161.

<sup>13</sup> Kelly, however, *op. cit.*, p. 214, 222–215, attributes an important role to Constantine in establishing and approving this term.

<sup>14</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, commentary, p. 251–252: “a wild animal wearing the marks of simplicity”.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, IV 61–62, p. 177–178; commentary, p. 339–340; Garth Fowden, “The Last Days of Constantine”, *The Journal of Roman Studies*, LXXXIV, 1994, p. 153–168.

<sup>16</sup> Kelly, *op. cit.*, does indeed devote part of a chapter to Arian theology, p. 231 *et seq.* He wrote that “the broad lines of his (sc. of Arius) system ... was a model of dovetailed logic”.

<sup>17</sup> Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, p. 49.

<sup>18</sup> Walter, *Conciles*, p. 260.

<sup>19</sup> For example, in a collection of canons, Vatican lat. 1339, which dates from about 1220, f. 7v, Arius is called *peximus* (sc. *pessimus*) *peximarum* (sc. *pessimarum*) *heresum inuenter et seminior in orbe*, Walter, *Conciles*, p. 63. Kelly, *op. cit.*, note 316, p. 216, calls Arius a *heresiarch*!

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 205–206.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 207.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 208.



were not recorded, it remains largely obscure.<sup>23</sup> However, the text of the creed, together with the anathemas which followed, are well attested.<sup>24</sup> This was the first creed promulgated by an ecumenical council, and, since the emperor presided, its decisions could be legally enforced throughout the empire. It must be observed that the phrases of the Creed which are inscribed on the unfolded scroll of later *proskynesis* icons of the Council are actually those which were used in the liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom. Of this more later. So much for the historical and theological background.

We can now turn to representations of the first Council of Nicaea and their iconography. The earliest ones are only known from the literary sources.<sup>25</sup> Since an ecumenical council was an imperial as well as an ecclesiastical event, pictures of them were displayed at the Milion, the official centre of Constantinople. This was a double triumphal arch forming a quadrangle. It was surmounted by a column on top of which were statues of Constantine and Helena.<sup>26</sup> The earliest reference to these pictures of councils is an account of the destruction of a picture of the sixth ecumenical council of Constantinople (681), commanded by the emperor Philippicus 711-713. It was replaced by the emperor Theodosius III (715-717). There is no explicit reference to the First Council of Nicaea being included among the pictures. However, it is clear that there really were pictures, not mere inscriptions, because we are told in the *Life of Saint Stephen the Younger* that they were destined to proclaim the

orthodox doctrine of the Empire to citizens from the provinces, to foreigners and to the illiterate.<sup>27</sup>

The earliest known representation of the First Council of Nicaea was in the church of Saint Sophia, in the city where the Council was held.<sup>28</sup> There is a reference to it in the *Chronographia* of Theophanes, dating from about 725.<sup>29</sup> A text in Paris *græc.* 1250, f. 188v, recounts that the picture was in mosaic and that the emperor Constantine figures with the bishops.<sup>30</sup> There are several other references in literary texts to early pictures of councils, now lost, but they do not mention the First Council of Nicaea.

If one turns to extant pictures of councils or synods, paradoxically the earliest ones are of the Iconoclast synod of Saint Sophia, held in 815. They figure in two ninth-century marginal Psalters, Pantocrator 61, f. 16, and Chludov (Moscow, Historical Museum 129 D), f. 23v. They illustrate Psalm 25, 4, "I have not sat with the council (συνέδριος) of the ungodly". Both miniatures are illustrated and fully described in my *Conciles*.<sup>31</sup> The only detail of concern here is the disposition of the participants. In the Pantocrator 61 miniature, they are seated inside a building, with the bishops to the left while one imperial figure is placed to the right. Between them, the Gospel Book is placed the wrong way round (Fig. 70). In the Chludov miniature, the participants at the synod are not given an architectural setting (Fig. 71). The patriarch is enthroned to the left with the bishops behind him, while the emperor is enthroned to the right with the members of his retinue also behind him. There is no Gospel Book or other sign, apart from the *omophorion* worn by the bishops, that this is an ecclesiastical scene. The synod is merged into a further scene to the right of a bishop and another man blotting out a clipeate image of Christ. A very similar iconography is seen in the better preserved miniature of the

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 212.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 215. For the text of the Nicene and other creeds, *vid.* also, *Documents of the Christian Church*, edited by Henry Bettenson, Oxford 1963 (second edition), p. 23-26; *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils I*, edited by Norman P. Tanner, Georgetown 1990, p. 1-4. I thank Father Joseph Munitiz for providing me with this bibliography.

<sup>25</sup> *Walter, Conciles*, p. 20-21.

<sup>26</sup> *Constantinople in the Early Eighth Century, The Parastaseis syntomoi chronikai*, edited by Averil Cameron and Judith Herrin, Leiden 1984, p. 94-95.

<sup>27</sup> Stephen the Deacon, *Life of Saint Stephen the Younger*, PG 100, 1172; *La Vie d'Etienne le Jeune par Etienne le Diacre*, edited by Marie-France Auzépy, Birmingham 1999.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, PG 100, 1144.

<sup>29</sup> Theophanes, *Chronographia*, edited De Boor, Leipzig 1883, I, p. 406 = PG 108, 817-820.

<sup>30</sup> The passage is published in Ch. Walter, *Conciles*, p. 21.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 26-29, figure 1, 2.

Psalter Barberini graec. 372, f. 43v, in the Vatican from ca. 1100 A.D. (Fig. 72). The enthroned figure in the middle clearly represents an emperor. Above this group of figures,  $\text{οἱ εἰκονομάχοι}$  is written, an inscription which is missing in the Chludov Psalter. Above them, a bishop is depicted standing and holding the image of Christ on a gold disk. He is inscribed in both manuscripts as  $\text{Νικηφόρος πατριάρχης}$ . The next extant representation of a council is in the manuscript of the *Homilies* of Gregory of Nazianzus, Paris graec. 510, f. 355 (Fig. 73). This is also presented in my *Conciles*.<sup>32</sup> The subject is the First Council of Constantinople, or, according to the accompanying inscription,  $\text{CΥΝΟΔΟΣ ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑ}$ . Although the miniature has some specific characteristics, it corresponds to one of the iconographical types which would be used regularly for the First Council of Nicaea. The picture is dominated by an enthroned Gospel Book.<sup>33</sup> The participants are seated in a semi-circle to the left and right of the Gospel Book. Theodosius I (O MEΓAC) is placed immediately to its right; he is imperially dressed and the only figure to be haloed. Below the participants is a table, which Brubaker calls an altar. The documents placed on it are, she surmises, the acts of the First Council of Nicaea.<sup>34</sup> To left and right are the heretics Makedonius and Apollinarius. In later iconography it was customary to place condemned heretics in the foreground. However, normally they were represented prostrate before those who anathematised them. In this miniature, the figure of Apollinarius was already lost in the seventeenth century.<sup>35</sup> However, Makedonius, who is hardly damaged, is in an unusual position; he crouches before the assembly, extending his right arm towards its members.

We may pass now to representations of Constantine and the First Council of Nicaea.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 35-37, figure 7. Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, p. 210-217, figure 36, gives much supplementary information.

<sup>33</sup> Walter, *Conciles*, p. 235-236; Brubaker, p. 212.

<sup>34</sup> Brubaker, p. 211. In fact, no acts of the first council exist.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 211.

# Vercelli CLXV, f. 28v.

The earliest extant representation of the first Council of Nicaea is in this manuscript<sup>36</sup> (Fig. 228). It has already received attention above in the section on Constantine's biographical cycles. In the scene which concerns us here, Constantine, imperially dressed and haloed, is enthroned with an armed guard behind him.<sup>37</sup> There is an inscription at his feet:  $\text{CONSTANTINUS imp.}$  He holds a scroll in his left hand. To the right are enthroned bishops, of whom the front one holds an open book. At their feet two groups of men wearing stoles are throwing books into a fire. Between them is an inscription:  $\text{HERETICI | ARRIANI (sic) | DAMNATI}$ . Constantine extends his raised right hand towards them, presumably in a gesture of condemnation. At the top of the miniature there is a long inscription:  $\text{SINODUS NICENI UBI FUIT NUMERUS | SCOM (sanctorum) PATR : CCCXVIII ET OMNES | SUBSCRIP | SERU | N | T}$ . Apart from the lack of architectural setting, there is the unusual representation of the heretics burning their books, which recurs, however, in the miniature f. 3v-4 of the First Council of Constantinople. In the case of the First Council of Nicaea this detail was probably inspired by an edict of Constantine's: "Should anyone find a book written by Arius, we order it to be destroyed by fire ... that no record of him may be left to posterity".<sup>38</sup> A final detail which is unusual is the portrait of Saints Peter and Paul on f. 3, opposite the representation of the Council of Nicaea. It is accompanied by an inscription:  $\text{UBI PETRUS ET PAULUS | DE HOC CONCILIO CON | FERUNT}$ . They could well have appeared at the beginning of the collection of texts, as guarantors of the authenticity of the whole series. However, it is clear from the inscription that they are particularly concerned with the First Council of Nicaea.

<sup>36</sup> Walter, "Les dessins carolingiens dans un manuscrit de Vercelli", *CahArch* XVIII, 1968, p. 99-107; reprinted in *Pictures as Language*, I, p. 1-13; *Conciles*, p. 50-52, figure 17.

<sup>37</sup> According to Eusebius, *Life*, III 10 2, p. 125, the Emperor's company was made up not of "some of the usual soldiers and guards, but only of his faithful friends".

<sup>38</sup> Socrates, *Historia ecclesiastica*, PG 67, 87-90.

## Vatican graec. 1613, p. 108

This miniature might be considered to be the "classical" portrayal of an ecumenical council<sup>39</sup> (Fig. 74). Yet it is not without its problems. While it is evidently a picture of the First Council of Nicaea, it illustrates the commemoration of the Second Council of Nicaea on October 12<sup>th</sup>. There is no point in surveying the conjectures which have been advanced in order to explain this "error". It will suffice to draw attention to the opposite confusion at Sucevița, Roumania, where a picture of the Second Council of Nicaea has served as a model for the First<sup>40</sup> (Fig. 247). In Basil II's *Menologion*, a cross with two transversal arms, not the Gospel Book, is placed in the centre. The emperor, imperially dressed with a halo, is enthroned to the right of the cross; his feet are placed on a stool. Three haloed bishops holding Gospel Books are seated to his left and right. They are not enthroned but each group shares a long seat; their feet are not placed on stools. Behind the bishops may be seen the heads of other personages of indefinite status. In the foreground lies the heretic wearing a simple tunic and mantle. Between his outstretched arms is a roll, presumably containing his condemned writings. His right hand is upturned as if in a speaking gesture. The precise significance of each detail of the representation of the heretic is open to interpretation, but there is no doubt that this is a scene of condemnation. Equally there is no doubt that particular prestige is attributed to the emperor. Is this also true of the three bishops seated to the left? While the three on the right hold their Gospel Book in both hands, the three on the left extend their right hand towards the heretic, as does the emperor. Further, can they be identified? If the subject of the miniature is really the First Council of Nicaea, then there is no doubt that the emperor is Constantine, although usually, at least from the ninth century, he was represented with a more developed beard. Equally the heretic is Arius, although there is no obvious way of determining exactly what were his physical features.

<sup>39</sup> *Il Menologio di Basilio II*, edited by C. Stornajolo and P. Franchi de' Cavalieri, Vatican/Milan 1907; Walter, *Conciles*, p. 37-38, frontispiece. A colour facsimile edition has recently appeared, but the commentary is still in preparation: *Il "Menologio" di Basilio II Imperatore di Bisanzio* (Codices e Vaticanis selecti. Series maior, 64), Vatican City, Madrid, 2005.

<sup>40</sup> I.D. Ștefănescu, *L'évolution de la peinture religieuse en Bucovine et en Moldavie*, Paris 1929, p. 149; Walter, *Conciles*, p. 102, 230, figure 112.

since they vary from one picture to another. Identification of the bishops, particularly those to the left, is yet more enigmatic, on account of the paucity of the written sources for the Council. Eusebius refers, without naming him, to the bishop "who was first in the row on the right" delivering a rhythmic speech, which opened the proceedings of the Council.<sup>41</sup> Presumably, but not necessarily, the phrase "on the right" should be understood from the point of view of somebody with his back to the Cross. Various identifications have been proposed: Eusebius of Nicomedia (who later baptised Constantine), Ossius of Cordoba, Eustathius of Antioch and Alexander of Alexandria.<sup>42</sup> However, since the literary and pictorial documentation which might have clearly established their identity is lacking, any suggestion is conjectural.

In sum, this miniature provides the following elements for an iconographical type of the First Council of Nicaea: the central presence of the Cross, the presiding emperor identified as Constantine, a certain number of bishops and the condemned heretic. No doubt the First Council of Nicaea was regularly represented in churches in Constantinople, but these paintings have not survived. However, a number of early pictures still exist, sometimes in a poor state of conservation, in the former kingdom of Serbia.

## Monastery of the Trinity, Sopoćani

This was founded by king Uroš I (1243-1276) about 1256 and painted between 1263 and 1268<sup>43</sup> (Fig. 243). There are in all eight councils, the eighth probably being the synod of Stefan Nemanja. Since the inscriptions are no longer legible, it is not possible to identify the councils individually. However, the artist used the same stereotyped formula for each one, which differs from that of the preceding pictures of councils, in that the seated members of the council are facing two

<sup>41</sup> Eusebius, *Life*, III 11, p. 125; commentary, p. 265.

<sup>42</sup> *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, op. cit., note 24, p. 1-2.

<sup>43</sup> *Conciles*, p. 107, figure 54; V. Đurić, *Vizantijske freske u Jugoslaviji*, Belgrade 1974, p. 39-41, note 41.



disputing groups, one orthodox and the other heretics. The same formula is used in other churches in the former kingdom of Serbia.<sup>44</sup>

### Church of the Bogorodica, Kučevište, near Skopje

This church was decorated about 1330. There are four pictures of councils on the south wall, with the seated members of the council again facing two disputing groups. Later pictures of councils of high quality exist in various regions of the former empire. A list of those known to me in 1971, arranged according to their regions, is given in my *Conciles*.<sup>45</sup> Here only a few which may help to a profounder understanding of the iconographical type are presented.

### Athos, the Great Lavra, Refectory

There are, in fact, three cycles including councils in the monastery. The one that concerns us here figures in a liturgical calendar on the wall of the south wing of the refectory. It is placed in October, although, in fact, the Second, not the First, Council of Nicaea was commemorated on October 12<sup>th</sup> (Fig. 244). The emperor Constantine, imperially dressed, presides, seated at the centre of a curved bench, his feet resting on a stool. Four bishops are seated to either side of him; the first one to the left wears a mitre. This could be Pope Sylvester (who, in fact, was not present) or the Patriarch of Alexandria, who also had the right to wear a mitre when celebrating the liturgy. Cyril Loukaris was the first Patriarch of Constantinople to wear the mitre in the sixteenth century, but he had previously been Patriarch of Alexandria, so that he merely continued his earlier practice. Succeeding Patriarchs of Constantinople followed his example.<sup>46</sup>

Only one member of the imperial guard stands behind the emperor; he holds a shield and, in his right hand, probably a sword. Directly beside

<sup>44</sup> *Conciles*, p. 109-119.

<sup>45</sup> *Conciles*, p. 76-120.

<sup>46</sup> Ch. Walter, "The Portrait of Jakov of Serres in London. Additional 39626", *Zograf* 7, 1976, *Pictures as Language*, n° IV, p. 70.

him behind the emperor is an altar covered with a baldachino. On the altar stands the Christ Child half naked, while a bishop, who is Saint Peter of Alexandria, extends his hands towards him in a gesture of adoration. The scene has no direct connection with the Council, because Peter of Alexandria was martyred in 311. Nevertheless it is often associated with representations of the First Council of Nicaea on account of its theological significance. Peter ordained Arius a deacon. When Meletius provoked a schism in Alexandria, Arius joined him. Nevertheless, he asked Peter for Arius to be allowed to receive communion. It was then that Peter had his vision of the Christ Child whose seamless robe was torn, a sign of the schism which Arius had helped to provoke. The Christ Child forbade Arius to receive communion, explaining that by his schism he had torn Christ's seamless robe.<sup>47</sup> A final point to make is that Arius in no way resembles the heretic in the Vatican *græc.* 1613 miniature (Fig. 74). In the wall painting, although he is crouched before the members of the council, he turns away from them. Further, he has the features of an elderly man with abundant white hair and a beard. At the extreme right of the bench, the bishop turns his head toward a man wearing a white headdress. Behind him another bishop stands, also with a headdress, possibly of basket work, in which case he would be Saint Spyridon and the other man a pagan philosopher, whom, according to legend, he converted to Christianity at the council.<sup>48</sup>

### Saint Sozomenus, Galata, Cyprus

This church, still in fairly good condition, is the only one in Cyprus to include councils in its decorative programme. The inscription over the West door says that the painting, by Symeon Axeniti, was completed on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1513.<sup>49</sup> The seven ecumenical councils, painted on the

<sup>47</sup> G. Millet, "La vision de Pierre d'Alexandrie", *Mélanges Charles Diehl*, Paris 1930, II, p. 102-103; Ch. Walter, *Conciles*, p. 246-248.

<sup>48</sup> P. van den Ven, *La légende de saint Spyridon, évêque de Trimithonte*, Louvain 1953, p. 87\*.

<sup>49</sup> Andreas and Judith A. Stylianou, *The Painted Churches of Cyprus*, (second edition), London 1985, p. 84.

outer North wall, are followed by an eighth picture of the Triumph of Orthodoxy; it will be discussed later.<sup>50</sup> The upper pictures are better conserved than the lower ones. A standard iconographical type has been used for all the pictures, the only distinctions being in the persons represented.<sup>51</sup> The emperor presides, seated upon a throne with a stool. The bishops in the first row, seated to the emperor's right and left, wear the *polystaurion*. Like him, they all have a halo. Behind them may be seen the heads of the other participants. The heretics are prostrate in the foreground. An unusual detail is that the name of each of the patriarchs and principal bishops is inscribed on his halo. So, for the First Council of Nicaea: Sylvester, Metrophanes, Alexander, Eustathius, Macarius, Nicolas, Spyridon (Fig. 246). Similarly the condemned heretics are named, in this case, of course, Arius. These names are advantageous, because the council has actually been misnamed in the accompanying inscription as being of Constantinople.

#### Sucevița, Roumania, Eastern Cupola of Narthex

The decoration of this church was terminated in 1595.<sup>52</sup> The cycle of ecumenical councils is painted in the two cupolas which cover the narthex. The representation of the First Council of Nicaea is rather larger than the others (Fig. 247). The emperor Constantine exceptionally shares a throne in the centre with his mother Helena. Both are imperially dressed; their feet are placed on a stool and they hold up a cross between them. This is the only case which is known to me of the empress Helena presiding with Constantine at the First Council of Nicaea. It has no historical foundation, unlike the pictures of the Second Council of Nicaea, in which the Empress Irene was correctly placed beside her

young son Constantine VI.<sup>53</sup> In this same picture, Saint Peter of Alexandria figures with his vision of the Christ Child wearing a torn garment, but here other orthodox bishops are also represented looking at the vision, while the heretical bishops turn away. Saint Spyridon is present converting the pagan philosopher.

#### Arbanasi, Bulgaria, Church of the Nativity

The paintings in this church were executed between 1632 and 1649.<sup>54</sup> They were in a good state of preservation when I visited the church in 1967. Their iconography merits more attention than it has received. So far as I am aware, no study has been devoted to them since the publication of my book on Councils. We are concerned here only with the representation of the First Council of Nicaea (Fig. 248). The emperor is seated at the centre of a curved bench with his feet on a stool. To his left and right are seated three bishops, haloed like him. The two seated immediately next to him wear a mitre. They hold the ends of a scroll, on which are inscribed the opening phrases of a Creed.<sup>55</sup> The bishop to the extreme right turns towards a figure without a halo, who is standing behind him. An inscription calls him a heretic. As in the scene in the refectory of the Great Lavra (Fig. 244), another bishop, with a headdress different from that of the two seated bishops, is standing nearby. This would, then, be the same incident of Saint Spyridon converting an unbeliever. Two armed guards stand behind the emperor, one with his sword raised. Behind them is the scene of Saint Peter of Alexandria's vision. The standing groups of bishops here pay no attention to the vision. Unusually, the figure to the extreme left does not wear episcopal

<sup>53</sup> Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, p. 158-159. The earliest surviving picture of the Second Council of Nicaea with the emperor and his mother enthroned together is probably that in the Metropolis at Mistra (XIVth-XVth century), Ch. Walter, *Conciles*, p. 89-90. Compare Dobrova, Roumania, *ibidem*, p. 98, figure 51.

<sup>54</sup> B.D. Filow, *L'art ancien bulgare*, Sofia 1924, p. 82; Ch. Walter, *Conciles*, p. 83-87, figures 38-44, inscriptions, p. 271.

<sup>55</sup> The phrase is taken from the Creed of the liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom. *Vis. infra*, the *proskynesis* icons.

<sup>50</sup> *Vis. infra*, "Constantine and Helena in Crete", note 30.

<sup>51</sup> Ch. Walter, "The Names of the Council Fathers at Saint Sozomenus, Cyprus", *REB* 28, 1970, p. 189-206; *Studies in Byzantine Iconography*, Variorum London, 1977, n° VI; Ch. Walter, *Conciles*, p. 87-89, figure 45.

<sup>52</sup> I.D. Ștefănescu, *L'évolution de la peinture religieuse en Bucovine et en Moldavie*, Paris 1929, p. 149; Walter, *Conciles*, p. 102, 230, figure 112.

vestments but a tunic, mantle and headdress; he is, however, haloed. The prostrate figure in the foreground has abundant dark hair; the accompanying inscription calls him the accursed heretic Arius. As was mentioned earlier, there was no standard portrait type for him.

These examples of wall paintings of the First Council of Nicaea all follow basically the same iconography as that of the miniature in Vatican *græc.* 1613 (Fig. 74). In each case the emperor presides, enthroned, crowned, his feet on a stool. There is no doubt of his pre-eminence. Thus, while all these pictures are in ecclesiastical buildings, they are, nevertheless, imperial in nature, like the earliest recorded pictures of councils at the Milion. They also imply that there was no inherent clash between *imperium* and *sacerdotium*.

Since publishing my doctoral thesis, I have discovered a number of pictures of councils, some wall paintings but more particularly icons, which I described in a subsequent article.<sup>56</sup> However, hitherto I have not published the two following churches with paintings of the First Council of Nicaea which were unknown to me in 1971.

### Monastery of the Dormition, Elešnički, near Sofia

Pandurski dated the paintings in this church to the seventeenth century.<sup>57</sup> They are exceptional in that Constantine is not present and that none of the ecclesiastical participants are represented as bishops; in fact they are all represented as monks (Fig. 245). However, the accompanying Slavonic inscriptions for the three councils which have survived, the first, third and sixth, make it clear that they are councils. A conjectural

<sup>56</sup> Ch. Walter, "Icons of the First Council of Nicaea", *DChAH*, Series IV, Vol. 16, 1991-1992; reprinted in Ch. Walter, *Pictures as Language* n° VIII, p. 166-187.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 187; V. Pandurski, *Elešnički manastir*, Sofia, 1981; Walter, *art. cit.*, note 57, p. 187; Stefan Šmajdovski, "Nadpisi k'm izobražejata na Bselenskiit s'bori v Elešnički manastir (XVI v.) - izvori i problemi", *Palaeobulgarica* 3, 1993, p. 77-83.

explanation of this inhiabitual iconography would be that the Bulgarians at the time were at loggerheads with the Greeks, who were imposing their authority on the Bulgarian Church and were trying to eliminate the Bulgarian language. The reaction of the Bulgarians was to represent councils without the participation of bishops, who at that time would have invariably been Greek, and to write the inscriptions not in Greek but in their own language.

### Monastery of the Nativity of the Virgin, Rožen near Melnik

A liturgical calendar is represented on the West wall of the narthex<sup>58</sup> (Fig. 251). The paintings date from the second half of the XVIth century, probably shortly before 1596. The First Council of Nicaea is portrayed with the conventional iconography: Arius prostrate before the emperor and bishops seated in an exedra, while behind them Saint Peter of Alexandria faces the Christ Child on the altar. The painting is placed at its correct date, the Sunday between the Ascension and Pentecost, which are represented to its left and right.

The icons of the First Council of Nicaea must now be re-examined. Only one, in a poor reproduction, was known to me in 1971. It is, in fact, by far the best and probably the earliest extant icon of the Council. It is signed by Michael Damaskinos and dated 1591<sup>59</sup> (Fig. 76). It is large in size (119 X 91 cm.) and one of a series of six icons painted by Damaskinos for the monastery of Saint Antony at Vrontisi.<sup>60</sup> Moved in 1800 to the monastery of Saint Menas, it is now in the monastery of Saint Catherine, Herakleion. Basically, the iconography is conventional, with Constantine and the bishops seated in a semi-circle and Arius prostrate in the

<sup>58</sup> Elka Bakalova, *Roženskijat manastir*, Sofia 1981; Georgi Gerov, *etc.*, *Stenopisite na Roženskija manastir*, Sofia 1993, schema, p. 41.

<sup>59</sup> Maria Konstantoudaki, *Μηχαὶλ Δαμασκινός*, University of Athens 1988, II, p. 290-291, III, figures 90-95; M. Chatzidakis, *Ελληνες Ζωγράφοι μετὰ τὴν Ἀλωση*, I, Athens 1987, p. 245 n° 54, p. 251, figure 7; Walter, *art. cit.*, p. 170-173, figure 3.

<sup>60</sup> E. Douglarakis, "Συμβολὴ εἰς τὴν ιστορίαν τῆς Μονῆς Βροντίσιου", *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 12, 1958, p. 169.



foreground. However, here the enthroned Gospel Book presides, as in the miniature of the First Council of Constantinople in Paris *græc.* 510, f. 355<sup>61</sup> (Fig. 73). It is unlikely that Damaskinos actually knew this miniature. He simply followed a literary tradition that the Gospel Book presided at the ecumenical Councils. In other respects, the icon is also theologically erudite. The details do not concern us here, but I have analysed them in my article on the icons of the First Council of Nicaea.<sup>62</sup> A considerable number of icons of the First Council of Nicaea were painted, but no icons of the other councils. They are smaller than the icon painted by Damaskinos, usually about 30 cm. X 20 cm. wide. They were obviously intended to be exposed for *proskynesis* when the First Council of Nicaea was commemorated in the liturgy. However, there are complications. Originally the Byzantines commemorated the First Council of Nicaea on May 29<sup>th</sup>. Later, the commemoration took place on the Sunday between the Ascension and Pentecost. It then included not only the commemoration of all the ecumenical councils but also of all "The Holy Fathers" (οἱ ἅγιοι πατέρες). They, in fact, originally had their commemoration on the Sunday before Christmas. It is illustrated in the Lectionary Dionysiou 587, f. 126<sup>63</sup> (Fig. 75). They are represented, so named in the accompanying inscription, in the Lectionary Morgan 639, f. 42, letter T, in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York (Fig. 249). Here an allusion to ecumenical councils is explicit in the prostrate figures of Arius and Nestorios below them.<sup>64</sup> Constantine is not represented, and

<sup>61</sup> Ch. Walter, Concils, p. 35-37, figure 7. Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, p. 210-217, figure 36.

<sup>62</sup> Ch. Walter, "Konzilien" (written in 1977), *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst* III, 1990, p. 738-746; "Le souvenir du II<sup>ème</sup> concile de Nicée dans l'iconographie byzantine", *Nicée II*, 787-1987, edited by F. Boespflug and N. Lossky, Paris 1987, p. 167-182, reprinted *Prayer and Power*, n° VIII; "The icon and the image of Christ: the second Council of Nicaea and Byzantine Tradition", *Sobornost* 19, 1988, p. 23-33, reprinted, *Pictures as Language*, p. 155-165; "Icons of the First Council of Nicaea", *DChAH*, Series IV, Vol. 16, 1991-1992, reprinted, *Ibidem*, p. 166-187.

<sup>63</sup> Walter, "Date and Content of the Dionysiou Lectionary", *DChAH*, Series IV, Vol. 13, 1985-1986 (1988), p. 185; reprinted, *Collected Series, Pictures as Language*, n° VI, p. 142.

<sup>64</sup> Walter, *art. cit.*, note 57, *Collected Series*, p. 180-181.

naturally he is absent from the miniature illustrating the Sixth Ecumenical Council in the Lectionary, Vatican *græc.* 1156, f. 253 in which only the "Holy Fathers" figure<sup>65</sup> (Fig. 250). These miniatures have been cited, because they are a precedent for a new iconographical type used in *proskynesis* icons of the First Council of Nicaea. I was introduced to it by an icon, which the anonymous owner allowed me to study and publish<sup>66</sup> (Fig. 252). Its size, 32 x 23.3 cm., makes it clear that it is a *proskynesis* icon. The bishops stand very much as in the aforementioned miniatures. However, there is an inscription [H] AΓΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΗ Α' ΣΥΝΟΔΟΣ | ΕΝ ΝΙΚΑΙΑ. Consequently it is evident that the imperial figure in the centre, holding the *akakia* in his right hand, is Constantine. Three similar icons, all on Mount Athos, are known to me. One is in the Monastery of Koutloumos<sup>67</sup> (Fig. 77). Another is in the Monastery of Ivron<sup>68</sup> (Fig. 253). They all have about the same dimensions, so that they are all evidently *proskynesis* icons. The bishop at each extremity of the group holds an end of a scroll which is not fully unrolled. This scroll is inscribed with the first phrases of the Creed, but not of the authentic Nicene Creed. Contemporary scholars have found it sufficiently difficult to establish its text exactly. Byzantine painters obviously made no such effort. They simply copied the phrases, which they inscribed on the scroll in their representations of the First Council of Nicaea, from the Creed in the liturgical text of Saint John Chrysostom which was then in use. By the time that these icons were painted, this Creed had become standardised, and it has remained so to this day. Unfortunately the icons themselves offer little evidence as to their date and provenance. Only the icon at Koutloumos has at the bottom a votive inscription: [Δ]ΕΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΔΟΥΛΟΥ ΤΟΥ Θ(ΕΟ)Υ ΑΡΣΕΝΙΟΥ ΜΟΝΑΧΟΥ ΕΚ ΠΟΛΕΙΩΣ. This inscription suggests that the icon was painted in Constantinople, but it is hardly possible to find out anything about the identity of the monk Arsenios. So far as the other icons are concerned, it is easy enough to make negative observations

<sup>65</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 181, figure 10.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 166-169, figure 1.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 178, figure 7.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 179, figure 8. There is a third in the Monastery of Stavronikita, about which I have no detailed information.

about their provenance. Their style has nothing in common with the products of painters working in the Cretan tradition. It displays neither the delicate modelling nor the subtle and sophisticated use of colours characteristic of the Cretan School. Also absent are the exuberance and the developed exploitation of perspective to be found in seventeenth-century icons painted in the Cyclades and the Ionian Islands. One is obliged in consequence to look north for comparative material, but, in doing so, one enters a region which, at present, is largely uncharted, and which stretches from the Adriatic Coast across Macedonia into Thrace.<sup>69</sup>

An examination of commemorations in the Byzantine liturgical calendar is more promising. Progressively individual commemorations of the seven ecumenical councils were suppressed, as well as that of the "Holy Fathers". They were all grouped together in a single feast of the First Council of Nicaea on the Sunday between Ascension and Pentecost. This became known – and is still known – as the commemoration τῶν πατέρων. However, the iconography of these *proskynesis* icons for the commemoration was that which has just been presented of the First Council of Nicaea. Presumably these liturgical reforms were initiated in Constantinople. It is therefore plausible – but by no means certain – that not only the votive icon of the monk Arsenios but also the others were painted in Constantinople after the aforementioned reform of liturgical commemorations had taken place. Unfortunately I am not in a position to indicate its date.

In conclusion, it must be said that a full investigation of the iconography of the emperor Constantine and the First Council of Nicaea has proved to be relatively complex. It was necessary to begin by tracing the historical origins of an ecumenical council back to the biblical assembly at Pentecost and then to continue with the development of synods, which ceased to be simple ecclesiastical gatherings when they also became a political institution because they were convoked by the emperor who presided. The earliest, no longer extant, representations of them were

commissioned by emperors. Constantine served as a model for his successors. The earliest surviving representations of councils, dating from the ninth and tenth centuries, provide evidence for the elaboration of an iconographical type, which, with additions, particularly for the First Council of Nicaea, was to persist throughout the Byzantine epoch and after it, although an alternative type, used only for *proskynesis* icons, was created at a late date. On these an unrolled scroll was held by two bishops with inscribed phrases not from the Nicene Creed but from the revised Creed which was incorporated into the liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom. Such a scroll figures once on a wall painting of the earlier iconographical type for the First Council of Nicaea at Arbanasi, but here it is held by Constantine himself (Fig. 248). It never figures in manuscript illumination. Here pictures of Councils are unusual; they are adaptations of the iconographical type used for "The Fathers". Constantine does not figure there, any more than in the exceptional wall painting at Elešnički near Sofia, from which bishops are also absent (Fig. 245). Liturgical reform led to the suppression of the numerous commemorations of councils, as well as the commemoration of "The Fathers". These came to be grouped together in a single commemoration at the date of the First Council of Nicaea on the Sunday between the Ascension and Pentecost. This commemoration figures in the liturgical cycle of paintings at Rožen near Melnik (Fig. 251). As a general rule, although with exceptions, Constantine is represented as the central figure in pictures of the First Council of Nicaea. His pre-eminence in Byzantine tradition therefore remained constant.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 167-170, where a number of possible but conjectural comparisons are suggested.



## NEW CONSTANTINES

In previous sections, the development has been described, particularly in Cappadocia, of what I called in an earlier study a 'typical scene',<sup>1</sup> in which Constantine and Helena stand together holding a cross between them. Such scenes summarised the biography of the person in question. Of course, in the case of Constantine and Helena, this is not strictly a scene; it is symbolical rather than historical, an ideological expression of the place of the Cross in their lives. Both came to be revered as saints, enjoying a commemoration in the Byzantine liturgy on the anniversary of Constantine's death on May 21<sup>st</sup>, probably from the IXth century<sup>2</sup>, and certainly in the later *Typika*. This typical scene became the standard way of representing them, particularly when they figured in an echelon of saints in church decoration. However, because they – especially Constantine – were venerated for the example which they offered to succeeding rulers, at first Byzantine but later Serbian, Bulgarian and even Russian, their portraits were also used in iconography as exemplars for these rulers. These two uses of their typical scene will now be investigated.

It is best to begin with examples of their representation in echelons of saints. No doubt the practice of so representing them began in Constantinople, but the churches there in which they might have figured no longer exist. The essential elements of this established iconographical type do not vary: Constantine and Helena, both imperially dressed, stand on either side of an erect Cross which they are holding up. There are differences in detail in their pictures, which may indicate the period when they were painted but do not modify their significance. Their dress may

be more or less sumptuous; Helena may wear the *thorakion*<sup>3</sup>, an oval strip of material hanging in front of her dress, usually, in her case, decorated with a cross. This was fashionable during the period of the Comnenes, but rarely portrayed under the Palaeologues. Sometimes they stand on a foot stool. It is notable that, although they were mother and son, they are invariably represented as two persons of the same age. Sometimes there are acronyms on or around the bars of their Cross. They are those habitually used in Byzantine art.<sup>4</sup> Sometimes there is a crown of thorns hanging from the central arm of the Cross.

Some examples will now be given, first those in Serbia, because a large number of portraits of Constantine and Helena have survived there. Too frequently the information available about them is laconic and sometimes not accompanied by an illustration.

At Žiža (ca 1220-1230), they are placed in the chapel in the tower with Saint Stephen and Saint Theodore Studite<sup>5</sup> (Fig. 254). This is a conventional representation; Helena's *thorakion* is marked with a Cross.

At Arilje (1296), they accompany Saints Peter and Paul with Saint John Chrysostom<sup>6</sup> (Fig. 256).

In the church of the Holy Apostles, Peć (ca 1300) they are placed above the entry<sup>7</sup> (Fig. 78).

At Gračnica (ca 1320), the Cross has a foot rest as well as two arms. They are placed on the West wall beside Saint Sava<sup>8</sup> (Fig. 79).

In the church of Saint Nikola Bolnički, Ohrid (1335-1336), they figure with portraits of monks and warrior saints.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Maria G. Sotiriou, "Το λεγόμενον θώρακίον της θυναυκίας αυτοκρατορικής στολής", *ΕΕΒΕ* 23, 1953, G. De Jerphanion, "Le thorakion," caractéristique iconographique du XI<sup>e</sup> siècle, *Mélanges Ch. Diehl*, Paris 1930, II, 71-79, with a list of the representations in art.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. Walter, "IC XC NI KA, The Apotropaic Function of the Victorious Cross", *REB* 55, 1997, p. 211-212, reprinted in this volume.

<sup>5</sup> Vojislav Đurić, *Vizantijske Freske u Jugoslaviji*, Belgrade, 1974, p. 34; Branislav Živković, *Žiža, Crteži Fresaka*, Belgrade 1985, p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> Đurić, *ibidem*, p. 44 (without a detailed description or illustration).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 48.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 52; Branislav Živković, *Gračnica, Crteži fresaka*, Belgrade 1989 (no pagination).

<sup>1</sup> Walter, *Warrior Saints*, p. 138.

<sup>2</sup> *Vid. sup.*, "The Significance of the Cross in Constantine's Iconography".



In the church of the Mali Sveti Brači, Ohrid (ca 1350), Constantine and Helena are portrayed in luxurious garments; Constantine's crown is exceptionally ornate and decorated with numerous pearls<sup>10</sup> (Fig. 258). In this same church, Saint Clement, the patron saint of the city, presents a model of the city to Saints Cosmas and Damian, the *Sveti Brači*<sup>11</sup> (Fig. 259). The obvious archetype is Constantine similarly represented in Saint Sophia, Constantinople (Fig. 35). However, the representation of Saint Clement in this way was an innovation at Ohrid.

At Markov manastir (1376-1381), Constantine and Helena figure in a series of portraits.<sup>12</sup>

In the old church of Saint Clement, Ohrid (1378), their portraits figure on the West wall to the right of the entrance, by which their apotropaic function becomes evident. Saints Cosmas and Damian are portrayed on the other side of the door.<sup>13</sup> (Figs. 260-261).

In the church at Palež (XIV-XVth century) only their names are mentioned.<sup>14</sup>

In the monastery of Kalenić, decorated during the reign of Stefan Lazarević (1389-1427), before 1418, Helena wears the *thorakion*, unusual in the Palaeologian period (Fig. 255). There is an acronym on the Cross in Slavonic I[A]Pb C[I]A[B]b (king of glory).<sup>15</sup>

In the church at Donja Kamenica (XIVth century; closer dating is controversial), Constantine and Helena are represented on the north wall beside Saint Nicolas and Saint John the Baptist (Fig. 262). Helena does not wear the *thorakion*; the crown of thorns hangs from the central arm of

the Cross, with the acronym ЁЁЁЁ around it.<sup>16</sup> The Despot Michael with his spouse Anne are represented on the West wall (Fig. 263). Đurić considered the paintings to be Bulgarian rather than Serbian.<sup>17</sup>

In the monastery of Saint John Theologos, Poganovo, (second half of XVth century, dated by an inscription to the effect that work on the church was terminated in 1499), the paintings were executed by artists originating in the region of Kastoria who also worked in the church of Kremikovci, Bulgaria. Constantine and Helena are painted on the South side of the West wall next to the entry, together with Saint Nestor (Fig. 264). On the North side they figure with the two Saints Theodore. Helena does not wear the *thorakion*. The crown of thorns hangs from the central arm of the cross.<sup>18</sup>

Much fewer examples in Bulgaria are recorded; they are all relatively late.

In the crypt of the ossuary of the monastery of Bačkovo (1344-1365), Constantine and Helena are represented in the South-East niche of the narthex<sup>19</sup> (Fig. 265). The painting is damaged, but the figures can be clearly distinguished. They hold a two armed cross which is placed on a pediment; Helena has no *thorakion* and there are no acronyms.

In the funerary chapel near Berende (XIVth century) the paintings are more damaged. However, the upper part of the portraits of Constantine and Helena are preserved (Fig. 80). They are placed to the right of the entrance door with the archangel Michael to the left. They hold a two-armed Cross. It is improbable that Helena wore the *thorakion*, but this part of the painting is destroyed. There are three acronyms: the familiar

<sup>10</sup> Đurić, *ibidem*, p. 67.

<sup>11</sup> *ibidem*, p. 69. Grozdanov, C., *Ohridsko zidno slikarstvo XIV veka (La peinture murale d'Ohrid au XIVe siècle)*, Belgrade 1980, p. 48 *et seq.*, figure 30.

<sup>12</sup> Grozdanov, *op. cit.*, p. 49, sch. 6.

<sup>13</sup> Đurić, *ibidem*, p. 81.

<sup>14</sup> *ibidem*, p. 89. Grozdanov, *Ohrid, op. cit.*, p. 143, schema 43, fig. 108.

<sup>15</sup> Đurić, *ibidem*, p. 97.

<sup>16</sup> Dragina Simić-Lazar, *Kalenić et la dernière période de la peinture byzantine, Istorijski, Kragujevac 2000*, p. 208-210, schema, p. 167; Branislav Živković, *Kalenić, Crteži Fresaka*, Belgrade 1982; Đurić, *ibidem*, p. 101-104, schema, p. 102.

<sup>17</sup> Ch. Walter, "JC XC NI KA, The Apotropaic Function of the Victorious Cross", *REB* 55, 1997, p. 211-212.

<sup>18</sup> Đurić, *ibidem*, p. 210, note 67; Branislav Živković, *Donja Kamenica, Crteži Fresaka*, Belgrade 1987, figure IV.

<sup>19</sup> Branislav Živković, *Poganovo, Crteži Fresaka*, Belgrade 1986, VII n° 17, introduction by Gojko Subotić.

<sup>20</sup> Elka Bakalova, *Bačkovskata Kostnica*, Sofia 1977, p. 158, illustration, p. 168, figure 132 *vid. infra*, note 57.

IC XC NI KA on and below the upper arm of the Cross and ΕΕΕΕ.<sup>20</sup> The third, which is unfamiliar, consists of two letters, one above and one below the arms of the Cross: C T (σταυρός?).

In the church of Saint George in the monastery of Kremikovci (before 1493), Constantine and Helena, as well as the archangel Michael, are similarly placed either side of the entrance door, holding a two armed cross with a foot rest (Fig. 81). Helena does not wear the *thorakion*, and there are no acronyms.<sup>21</sup>

In the church of the Saviour at Alino (1626), Constantine and Helena are again painted to the right of the entrance door on the West wall.<sup>22</sup> They hold a Cross whose shape is unusual, because the upper arm is at the top. Helena again does not wear the *thorakion* and there are no acronyms. This church is remarkable for the number of portraits of Bulgarian saints who are painted on the walls.

A few examples, among which earlier ones than those in Serbia mentioned above, have survived in Kastoria.

In the narthex of the church of Agioi Anargyroi, Constantine and Helena are painted in luxurious imperial garments, rendered with fine decoration<sup>23</sup> (Fig. 82). Their heads are on the contrary painted in a provincial style, revealing large eyes; their small, flat crowns are awkwardly placed on their heads. The portrait of the diseased Konstantinos, the namesake of Saint Constantine, is painted next to them in smaller size, as he turns in the direction of the saints in a Deësis gesture. The day of his death, November 21, is mentioned in the

<sup>20</sup> Ch. Walter, "IC XC NI KA, The Apotropaic Function of the Victorious Cross", *REB* 55, 1997, p. 211-212. Elka Bakalova, *Stenopisite na C'rkvata pri selo Berende*, Sofia 1976, fig. 46.

<sup>21</sup> Kostadinka Paskaleva-Kabadieva, *C'rkvata Sv. Georgi v Kremikovskija Manastir*, Sofia 1980, p. 62, figures 17-18 and 21-22, p. 24-25 and 29-30. If Subotić is right, *vid. sup.*, note 18, that this church was in part decorated by the same artists from Kastoria who later worked at Poganovo, then these paintings can be dated about 1450.

<sup>22</sup> Elena Floreva, *Alinskitte Stenopisite*, Sofia 1983, p. 121, figure 63, p. 115, figure 70, p. 123.

<sup>23</sup> St. Pelekanidis and M. Chatzidakis, *Kastoriá*, Athens 1984, p. 23, fig. 6 on p. 29.

inscription above him, but not the year. These three portraits belong to the second layer of the paintings of this church and date from the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

In the church of Agios Stephanos in Kastoria, Constantine and Helena figure in the doorway from the main nave to the narthex<sup>24</sup> (Fig. 83). Their garments are painted in detail and their heads in a linear style with accentuated cheeks. They wear angular crowns with prependicular hanging from the outer corners. They belong to the second layer of the paintings of this church and may be dated ca. 1200 A.D.

Constantine and Helena are represented on the West wall, next to the entrance in the later erected church of Saint Athanasios of Mouzakis<sup>25</sup> (Fig. 86). The garments of Constantine are decorated with the *loros*, while those of Helen with the *tablion*; she is thus differently clothed than usual. Both wear archaic, angular crowns. On the other side of the door, the archangel Michael and Saint Barbara are portrayed. Above the door an inscription is written, mentioning the year 1383/1384 and various members of the Mouzakis family, among whom certainly an Athanasios, the namesake of St. Athanasios, to whom the church is dedicated.

In mosaic, Constantine and Helena appear in a lunette flanked by two female saints in medallions in the *Catholicon* of the monastery of Hosios Loukas, Phocis<sup>26</sup> (Fig. 84). They hold a cross with two transversal arms and a foot rest. The richly decorated large *loroi* contrast their plain robes; the *thorakion* of Helena is also decorated with a cross with two bars. The crowns have the form of those seen on Byzantine emperors from around the middle of the eleventh century.

In all these churches, with the exception of the ossuary chapel at Bačkovó, to which it will be necessary to return, Constantine and Helena are simply members of a cycle of saints. Those whom they accompany, notably Saint Michael the archangel, are among the ones who were particularly revered in Byzantine tradition. When they are painted on the

<sup>24</sup> Pelekanidis and Chatzidakis, *op. cit.*, fig. 7 on p. 13.

<sup>25</sup> Pelekanidis and Chatzidakis, *op. cit.*, p. 106-107, fig. 2 on p. 109.

<sup>26</sup> Nano Chatzidakis, *Byzantine Mosaics*, Athens 1994, pl. 74, p. 238.

West wall beside the entrance door to the church, occasionally with the archangel Michael, they evidently have an apotropaic function.

The pictures in which they exercise a more specific function with regard to emperors or other despots will now be considered. References to this function occur frequently in the literary sources. Thus, in the acclamations at early councils, the presiding emperor and empress were hailed as a New Constantine and a New Helena. This practice died out. In fact it was probably only revived again in the reign of Basil I (867-886). There is no doubt that Basil I personally emulated the emperor Constantine and that he was called a New Constantine by Pope Stephen V (885-891).<sup>27</sup> However, Basil I had already bestowed this title on his eldest son (died 879). Probably he was the New Constantine commemorated in the *Sirmondianus* on September 3rd, although Constantine IV (668-685) has also been proposed.<sup>28</sup>

The expression New Constantine was not invariably used in the literary sources; equivalent ones like the Second Constantine were often preferred. An exceptional example is provided by Michael VIII Palaeologus (1259-1282). When he conquered Constantinople back from the Latins, he regarded himself, not unexpectedly, as a New Constantine, whose ambition was to restore the Byzantine capital to its pristine splendour.<sup>29</sup> This demanded the revival of some archaic customs which had fallen into desuetude. There are several references to him as a New Constantine.<sup>30</sup> Apparently the patriarch Germanos (1265-1266) accepted him as such; so did Manuel Holobolos, the emperor's rhetor, an office which Michael VIII had revived. Holobolos composed annually an oration celebrating Michael VIII's achievements as analogous to those of Constantine I: a founder of cities, a victorious general, a courageous

hunter and a dispenser of justice.<sup>31</sup> Particularly important for the art historian is Michael VIII's revival of the *peplos* (πέπλος), a woven garment on which there were scenes depicting the ruler's achievements.<sup>32</sup> Originally a *peplos* had been offered to the emperor each year; like the rhetor's oration, it recalled the emperor's deeds during the preceding year. However, it seems that Michael VIII extended its use considerably. One representing him as the New Constantine was displayed by the patriarch Germanos in Saint Sophia.<sup>33</sup> Michael VIII also used the *peplos* for diplomatic purposes. For example, the treaty of Nymphaeum (1261), which Michael VIII made with the Genoese against the Venetians, was sealed by the despatch to Genoa of three *peploi*,<sup>34</sup> two of which Holobolos described. One which has survived is in the Palazzo Bianco at Genoa. According to Holobolos, one was decorated with a biographical cycle of Saint Lawrence, the patron saint of Genoa, but he failed to describe what was, for the present study, the most important scene: Michael VIII being escorted by Saint Lawrence and the archangel Michael into the church of the patron saint.<sup>35</sup> This is the unique surviving example of a *peplos* portraying Michael VIII as a New Constantine. It is also a unique surviving representation of a New Constantine unaccompanied by Constantine I himself.

Serbian texts expressing their rulers' emulation of Constantine, whom they held in considerable awe, are abundant from the earliest days of the Nemanjić dynasty.<sup>36</sup> Stefan Nemanja, who had retired to Mount Athos, sent his son Stefan Prvovenčani (1217-1228) a relic of the Cross, accompanied by a letter in which he referred to the antique emperor Constantine who was protected by the Cross from the hordes of devils. Emulation of Constantine and faith in the power of Cross is also evident

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 29, note 88.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 28.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 41.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 34.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 34-35. For reproductions of the Genoese *peplos*, *ibidem*, p. 34, note 113, *vid.* especially R. S. Lopez, "The Silk Industry in the Byzantine Empire", *Speculum* XX, 1945, plate VII.

<sup>36</sup> Vojislav Đurić, "Le nouveau Constantin dans l'art serbe médiéval", *AIΘO-ΣΤPATON, Studien zur byzantinischen Kunst und Geschichte, Festschrift für Marcell Restle*, Stuttgart 2001, p. 55-65.

<sup>27</sup> *Vid. sup.*, "Basil I and Constantine".

<sup>28</sup> Patricia Karlin-Hayter, "Quel est l'empereur Constantin le Nouveau contemporain dans le synaxaire au 3 septembre?", *Byzantion* 36, 1966, p. 624-626.

<sup>29</sup> Ruth Macrides, "The New Constantine and the New Constantinople - 1261?", *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, Oxford 1980, p. 13-41.

<sup>30</sup> Macrides lists eight, *ibidem*, p. 23, note 55.



in the first coins minted by the Serbian despot Stefan Radoslav (ca 1228, ca 1233), on which he is depicted holding a Cross jointly with Constantine (Fig. 275), following exactly the iconographical type of Constantine and Helena.<sup>37</sup> Stefan Nemanja's other son, Archbishop Sava, composed a *stichera* in honour of Constantine and Helena.<sup>38</sup> Later, in the XIVth century, eulogies of Serb despots were composed, like that which archbishop Danilo II devoted to the late king Milutin (1282-1321) and those written in honour of king Stefan Dečanski (1321-1331), who was explicitly called a Second Constantine.<sup>39</sup> However, only in the XVth century was the expression a New Constantine used for the same Stefan Dečanski by Grigorije Camblak.<sup>40</sup>

The practice spread to Bulgaria, where the tsar Ivan Alexander (1331-1371) was said to have the victorious cross for a sceptre; this enabled him to rout his enemies. He resembled the emperor Constantine by his faith and devotion as well as his success in battle.<sup>41</sup> In Russia, prince Vladimir of Kiev (972-1015) was considered to be a New Constantine, because he had converted his people to Christianity.<sup>42</sup>

Such is the documentary and historical background to the iconography of Constantine and Helena accompanying New Constantines. However, before presenting the iconography, reference should be made to a precursor of these pictures, which has already been mentioned among paintings in Cappadocia.<sup>43</sup> The programme of the Pigeon-House (Kuşluk) of Çavuşin (962-969) is outstanding, not only in Cappadocian church decoration but in Byzantine art in general. Not surprisingly, it has attracted the attention of many specialists in Byzantine art and has an extensive bibliography.<sup>44</sup> The whole programme was prepared with remarkable erudition, setting the military triumphs of John Tzimisces in

an overall providential plan. He is shown on horseback, followed by the Magister Melias, also on horseback, and by a few standing saints from the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste (Figs. 87, 266-267). In the apse Constantine and Helena are portrayed holding between them either the Cross or a reliquary containing a parcel of it (Fig. 217). There is no specific implication that John I Tzimisces (969-976), to whom the church was dedicated anew after the death of Nicephorus II Phocas (963-969), any more than his predecessor, were "New Constantines". In later church decoration, the potential implication would become explicit. Constantine and Helena could be placed adjacent to the Serbian despot or facing him on the opposite wall. In the narthex of the church at Mileševa (ca 1236), they are placed on the east wall; Helena wears the *thorakion* (Figs. 92, 270). On the south wall is the Byzantine emperor John III Vatatzes (1222-1254), while three members of Nemanjić dynasty, the donor Vladislav (ca 1233-1242), not yet crowned but holding a model of the church, Radoslav (ca 1228-1233) and Stefan Prvovenčani (ca 1196-ca 1228) holding a sceptre, are depicted on the north wall (Figs. 93, 268). The unusual presence of the portrait of the reigning Byzantine emperor suggests that at the time relations were cordial between the Byzantines and the Serbians, who considered themselves to be a subordinate people.<sup>45</sup>

The despot Milutin (1282-1321), however, as he progressively conquered Byzantine territory, came to consider himself to be on a virtually equal status with the Byzantine emperor, particularly after his marriage with Andronikos II's (1282-1328) five-year-old daughter in 1299.<sup>46</sup> It will be recalled that her grandfather, Michael VIII (1259-1282) had regarded himself as a New Constantine.<sup>47</sup> There is no record of Milutin referring to himself as such, although he was given the title after

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 55; S. Marjanović-Dušanović, "Nemanjin naprsni krst. Iz naše insignologije" *Zbornik Filozofskog Fakulteta* XVII/A, 1991, p. 203-214.

<sup>38</sup> Đurić, *ibidem*, p. 56.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 58.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem* p. 60-61.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 63.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>43</sup> *Ud. sup.*, "The Significance of the Cross in Constantine's Iconography".

<sup>44</sup> Walter, *Warrior Saints*, p. 174, 282-283 and *sub indice*.

<sup>45</sup> Đurić, *Vizantijske freske*, p. 37; Branislav Živković, *Mileševa. Crteži Fresaka*, Belgrade 1992, p. 35, 37, 39. In fact, the autocephalous archbishop of Serbia recognised the primacy of the patriarchate of Nicaea, Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, p. 388.

<sup>46</sup> Ch. Walter, "The Iconographical Sources for the Coronation of Milutin and Simonida at Gračanica", *L'art byzantin au début du XIVe siècle*, Belgrade 1978, reprinted, *Prayer and Power*, IV, p. 1981, p. 198; Ostrogorsky, *op. cit.*, p. 465, plan of the expansion of Serbian conquests.

<sup>47</sup> Ruth Macrides, "The New Constantine and the New Constantinople - 1261?" *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, Oxford 1980, p. 13-41.

his death by his biographer archbishop Danilo II.<sup>48</sup> However, in the epigraph which accompanies him in his portrait at Gračanica (ca 1320), he refers to himself as being "by divine grace sole despot (*autocrator* or *samodržac*) of all the Serbians by land and sea", recalling the formula used, according to Pseudo-Codinus, at imperial coronations.<sup>49</sup> One may compare the later portrait of Stefan Lazarević, despot from 1402, at Ljubostinja. Two angels place a crown upon his head, while one of them also presents him with a sword<sup>50</sup> (Figs. 85 and 269). At Gračanica, Milutin and Simonida are having imperial crowns placed on their heads by angels sent by Christ<sup>51</sup> (Figs. 89-91). Earlier at Arilje (1296), his portrait was comparatively modest. He was represented in imperial dress with his elder brother Dragutin (1276-1282), whom he overthrew, being blessed by Christ<sup>52</sup> (Fig. 271). Milutin had been master of Byzantine territory in the region of Skopje for more than a decade. Nevertheless, he was on good terms with Andronikos II who helped him to oust his brother and apparently condoned his continuing usurpation of Byzantine territory.<sup>53</sup>

It was in the King's Church (*Kraljeva Crkva*) at Studenica (1314) that Milutin's portrait was first explicitly associated with that of Constantine and Helena.<sup>54</sup> This is the richest of the Nemanjić dynastic cycles. Constantine and Helena, unfortunately destroyed apart from their head and the top of the Cross which they hold, are situated to the left of the entry door in the West wall. Thus they have an apotropaic role as well as being the object of Milutin's emulation.<sup>55</sup> The Serb despot, as donor of the church, holds a model of it, while Simonida beside him holds a long sceptre; she does not wear the *thorakion* (Figs. 94, 96 and 257). They are situated on the South wall; the lower part of their bodies is destroyed.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Gođana Babić, *Kraljeva Crkva u Studenici*, Belgrade 1987, p. 190, surmises that the title was already in use in Milutin's lifetime.

<sup>49</sup> Walter, *Prayer and Power*, IV, p. 184, especially note 8.

<sup>50</sup> Walter, *ibidem*, p. 199, plate 17.

<sup>51</sup> Walter, *ibidem*, p. 184, figure 1.

<sup>52</sup> Walter, *ibidem*, p. 198; Đurić, p. 44.

<sup>53</sup> Ostrogorsky, *op. cit.*, p. 442-443.

<sup>54</sup> Đurić, p. 51; Babić, *op. cit.*, p. 190, 191, note 509.

<sup>55</sup> Babić, schema VIII, p. 240.

<sup>56</sup> Babić, schema VI, p. 238, plate XXXIII, p. 60.

The epigraph beside Milutin calls him "Stefan the great despot Uroš, despot of the Serbian lands and [those] by the sea"<sup>57</sup> Two earlier members of the Nemanjić family, Stefan or Symeon Nemanja (ca 1167-1196), the founder of the dynasty, dressed as a monk and his son Sava, Archbishop of Serbia, dressed as bishop, are portrayed on the North wall (Fig. 95 and 97). Their hands are extended in a gesture of adoration towards the Virgin and Child.<sup>58</sup>

Milutin restored and redecored the church of Saint George at Staro Nagoričino (1316-1318). Since the local populace spoke Greek, for the territory was a recent conquest from the Byzantines, the epigraphs are all in Greek. On the North wall there is a remarkable dedication scene. Milutin and Simonida stand together, Milutin on the right holding a model of the church which he presents to Saint George. To their left, stand Constantine and Helena jointly holding the Cross. This juxtaposition clearly indicates that Milutin considered himself to be a Second Constantine.<sup>59</sup>

The same juxtaposition occurs in the church of Saint Nicolas at Psača (1365-1371).<sup>60</sup> The tsar Stefan Uroš (1355-1371) stands beside the despot Vukašin (1366-1371). Both hold a sceptre in the form of a three-barred cross. Beside them stand Constantine and Helena, as usual jointly holding a Cross from the central bar of which hangs the crown of thorns.

Finally for Serbia, in the monastery of Marko (1376-1381) the despots Vukašin (1366-1371) with his wife Jelena and Marko are represented on the North wall of the narthex next to Constantine and Helena on the West wall.<sup>61</sup>

There is only one example to be noted for Bulgaria, in the ossuary church at Bačkovo (1344-1365). Reference was made above to the representation of Constantine and Helena in the South-West niche of the

<sup>57</sup> Transcribed by Babić, p. 20-21.

<sup>58</sup> Babić, Schema VII, p. 239, plate XXXII, p. 58-59.

<sup>59</sup> Branislav Todić, *Staro Nagoričino*, Belgrade 1993, p. 113-121, fig. 23; Đurić, p. 51.

<sup>60</sup> Đurić, p. 75, figure 73; *Idem*, "Le nouveau Constantin", p. 57, figure 1.

<sup>61</sup> Đurić, p. 80-82, 218-219, note 105; *Idem*, "Le nouveau Constantin", p. 57.

narthex<sup>62</sup> (Fig. 265). Tsar Ivan Alexander (1331-1371) is represented in the North-West niche<sup>63</sup> (Fig. 98). He is imperially dressed; above him in a segment the Virgin and Child are blessing him, while two angels are placing a crown on his head. It is a majestic picture. Although the disposition of his portrait and that of Constantine and Helena is unusual, they are no doubt to be associated. Tsar Ivan Alexander, an outstanding patron of the arts, was obsessed by his own importance. His coronation by angels, while certainly not original,<sup>64</sup> was not usually associated in portraiture with the archetypal juxtaposition of Constantine and Helena. He used several extravagant titles.<sup>65</sup>

In his illuminated Psalter, Sofia BAN (Bulgarian Academy of Science), codex n° 2, he "is called by faith and piety, heart and nature [a] New Constantine among tsars having for his sceptre [the] victorious cross". An identical comparison is made in his illuminated Gospels, London Add. 39627<sup>66</sup> (Fig. 99). On f. 3, Ivan Alexander is portrayed with his wife and his two sons. Both Ivan Alexander and his elder son, Ivan Šišman, hold a sceptre mounted with a cross. In the accompanying epigraph, Ivan Alexander is called tsar and *autocrat* of the Bulgarians and Romans.<sup>67</sup> His dynastic iconography is thus particularly rich.

<sup>62</sup> Elka Bakalova, *Bačkovskata Kostnica*, Sofia 1977, p. 158, illustration, p. 168, figure 132.

<sup>63</sup> *Eadem*, p. 165-166, figure 131.

<sup>64</sup> Walter, *Prayer and Power*, p. 184, figure 1.

<sup>65</sup> Bakalova, p. 165-166, p. 208, note 28.

<sup>66</sup> Ivan Dujčev, *Iz starata b'lgarska knižnina*, Sofia 1970, II, p. 159.

<sup>67</sup> Azimia Džourava, *Byzantinische Miniaturen*, Regensburg/Milan, 2002, figure 164.

## CONSTANTINE AND HELENA IN CRETE

About eight hundred painted churches have survived in Crete.<sup>1</sup> They are generally small and the quality of the paintings, as well as their state of conservation, vary considerably. Consequently the identification of the scenes is sometimes problematic. Most were painted during the period of Venetian occupation (1210-1669). Byzantine influence is evident especially in the earlier ones; in the later ones, their iconography may sometimes be traced to Western sources. Constantine and Helena figure in a number of them, certainly in others besides those which are listed here. Some have attracted the interest of art historians who have studied them in detail.<sup>2</sup> The relevant paintings will now be presented so far as possible chronologically.

### Saint Constantine, Pyrgos, Monofatsi, Herakleion

The church, which may be dated to 1315, contains four scenes concerned with Constantine.<sup>3</sup> The first is called in the accompanying inscription his Birth (Fig. 100). To the right, his mother, Helena, is reclining on a couch, whose front is decorated with a pattern of crosses. Behind her stands a

<sup>1</sup> Chatzidakis, M., "Τοιχογραφίες στην Κρήτη", *Kretika Chronika*, 6 (1952), 59-91. Kalokyris, K., *The Byzantine Wall Paintings of Crete*, New York, 1973. Gallas, K., Wessel, K., Borboudakis, M., *Byzantinisches Kreta* (Studium und Reise), Munich, 1983. Bissinger, M., *Kreta. Byzantinische Wandmalerei* (Münchener Arbeiten zur Kunstgeschichte und Archäologie, 4), Munich, 1996. Spatharakis, I., *Byzantine Wall Paintings of Crete, Rethymnon Province*, I, London 1999. Spatharakis, I., *Dated Byzantine Wall Paintings of Crete*, Leiden 2001.

<sup>2</sup> The pioneer study is by Maria Vasilaki, "Εικονογραφικοί κύκλοι από τη ζωή του Μεγάλου Κωνσταντίνου σε εκκλησίες της Κρήτης", *Κρητική Εστία*, Δ' 1, 1987, p. 60-84.

<sup>3</sup> *Byzantinisches Kreta*, p. 375-377; Spatharakis, *Dated*, p. 36-38.



black figure. To her left, a procession of four female figures move towards her, possibly carrying nourishment. In front of them in the foreground, two other female figures are washing the infant Constantine who is seated in an ornamented bowl reminiscent of a baptismal font. Above them, a hand projects from a segment in the centre of which is a star. Presumably this is the hand of God blessing the infant. In the background to left and right there is architectural decoration.

The inscription accompanying the second scene says that Constantine is being taken by his mother to his father Constantius Chlorus: Ο ΑΓ[ΙΟ]C ΚΩΝCΤΑΝΤΙΝΟC ΕΠΑΓΟΜΕΝΟC ΥΠ[Ο] ΤΗC ΜΗΤΡΟC ΠΡΟ[Τ]ΟΝ ΤΟΝ ΠΑΤΕΡΑ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΚΩΝCΤΑΝ[ΤΙΟΝ] ΤΙ[ΟΝ] [Χ]ΑΛΩΝ (Fig. 101). To the right, Helena is seated side-saddle on a black horse; her facial features are the same as in the preceding scene. She follows another male figure seated on a white horse. Unfortunately, this figure is rather damaged, but it is clear that the man is holding in his arms the young Constantine whose costume reaches only to his knees. The scene is enigmatic, because there is no record of Constantine meeting his father during his boyhood.

The inscription accompanying the third scene calls it The Force of the Great Constantine against Diocletian: Η ΔΥΝΑΜΗ ΤΟΥ [ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΚΩΝCΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥ] [ΚΑΤΑ] ΤΟΥ ΔΙΟΚΛΗΤΙΑΝΟΥ<sup>4</sup> (Fig. 102). The lower part of the painting is badly damaged. However, a figure, who is obviously Constantine, may be clearly discerned, seated on a white horse, wearing a crown and holding a high cross. He is accompanied by another figure in armour also seated on a white horse, while other armed soldiers on foot march at his side behind him. Like the inscription accompanying the preceding picture, the one accompanying this scene corresponds to no historically known encounter. Moreover, it is highly implausible. Constantine, born in 272/3, only took command of the army in 310 on his father's death, while Diocletian had retired to his palace at Spalato on the Dalmatian coast in 305. Fortunately, further details besides the cross which Constantine is carrying make it possible to identify the scene independently of the inscription. Above Constantine, the haloed figure of Christ in a segment extends a hand in which he is

holding a cross. Further, figures in civil dress stand before Constantine in an archway, behind which buildings can be discerned in spite of the fact that the painting here is damaged. Consequently the scene can be interpreted as representing together Constantine's Vision and his Entry into the city of Rome. It differs in its details from earlier representations of the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, as, for example, on his Arch in Rome and in Paris *græc.* 510, f. 440, but it is evidently related to them<sup>5</sup> (Figs. 47 and 171).

The fourth and final scene is not accompanied by an inscription; also it is damaged (Fig. 103). In the centre, stands a tall figure, imperially dressed and wearing a crown. His hands are extended over two smaller figures, also imperially dressed, standing either side of him. He places a crown on each of their heads. It has been suggested that the scene represents Constantine crowning his two sons. However, the more likely explanation is that Christ is crowning Constantine and Helena.<sup>6</sup> It is unusual but not unknown for Christ to be represented in imperial dress, for example presiding at a Deësis.<sup>7</sup>

### Saint Constantine, Kritsa, Merabello, Lassithi

This church is a single nave chapel.<sup>8</sup> Its dedicatory inscription, partially preserved, makes it possible to date it to 1354/5. Three scenes of the Cycle of Constantine have survived. The inscription of the first scene is badly preserved, but it clearly shows the Triumph of Constantine (Fig.

<sup>5</sup> *Vid. sup.* "The Art of Constantine's Reign" and "Constantine's Biographical Cycles", Vasilaki, Constantine, p. 22, figure 289, has also detected in the lower left hand corner of the picture a small figure with a conical hat which is extremely damaged. According to her conjecture, this would be a pagan enemy analogous to those attacking Constantine in the miniature in the Chludov Psalter, f. 58v, *vid. sup.*, "Constantine's Biographical Cycles" (Fig. 58).

<sup>6</sup> Vasilaki, Constantine, figure 28a.

<sup>7</sup> Ch. Walter, "Bulletin on the Deësis and the Paraklesis", *REB* 38, 1980. Compare Christ in antique costume crowning Romanus and Eudocia. Ch. Walter, "Marriage Crowns in Byzantine Iconography", *Zograf* 10, 1979, reprinted, *Prayer and Power*, p. 3, figure 7.

<sup>8</sup> Spatharakis, *Dated*, n° 33, p. 97-98.

<sup>4</sup> Vasilaki, Constantine, p. 68-70, figure 25.

[104]. It is for the most part well preserved, but its iconography is somewhat abridged, in that the city of Rome is not represented, Constantine, wearing armour including a helmet, is seated on a white horse. Other warriors, also wearing helmets, accompany him, some brandishing spears.

The second scene is his Baptism (Fig. 105). Constantine stands naked in a large baptismal font with his arms folded. He wears a crown on his head and is haloed. The sacrament is being administered by a figure, also haloed, in episcopal dress. Other figures, probably members of the clergy, stand to left and right, and there is an architectural background. The iconography is obviously dependent on Western tradition, according to which Constantine was baptised by a pope after taking possession of Rome. However, it entered Byzantine tradition and was recorded, for example, by John Malalas in his *Chronographia*.<sup>9</sup>

The third scene, The Invention of the Cross, has presented difficulties to its would-be interpreters, but undoubtedly Vasiliki Tsamakda found the right solution, despite the dilapidated state of the painting<sup>10</sup> (Fig. 106). The architectural background is largely destroyed, as is the group of figures standing to the left. However, it can be made out that the figure who heads the group is holding an upright cross placed on a stand. At the foot of the stand, a number of nails may be discerned. This figure would be Judas who was reputed to have found the Cross, later becoming bishop of Jerusalem and changing his name to Cyriacus. To the right is a haloed figure in imperial dress, seated on a throne, already identified by Maria Vasilaki as Helena.<sup>11</sup> Behind her stands a haloed bishop, wearing a *polystavrion*. He would be Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem at the time of the Invention. Tsamakda rightly compares the figure with the enthroned Helena in the scene of the Invention in Paris *græc.* 510, f. 440<sup>12</sup> (Fig. 47).

<sup>9</sup> *Chronographia*, edited D. Dindorf, Bonn 1831.

<sup>10</sup> Vasiliki Tsamakda, "Zwei seltene Szenen aus der Kreuzauffindungslegende Kreta", *BZ* 97, 2004, p. 153-166.

<sup>11</sup> Vasilaki, *Constantine*, p. 80, note 56.

<sup>12</sup> Tsamakda, *art. cit.*, p. 162-163, figures 6-7.

### The Theotokos, Spina, Kantanos, Chania

This church is situated ten kilometres north of Kantanos in the region of Chania.<sup>13</sup> Tsamakda dates it to the last quarter of the XIVth century. It has a parecclesion, probably dedicated originally to Saints Constantine and Helena, whose portraits figure on the south wall; Helena's name may be read in the accompanying inscription. There are two scenes from the cycle of the Invention of the Cross.

In the first, Helena is interrogating Judas, who later changed his name to Cyriacus (Fig. 108). The accompanying inscription reads: Η ΑΓΙΑ ΕΛΕΝΗ ΔΙΑΛΕΓΕΤ[ΑΙ] ΤΟΝ ΚΥΡΗΑΚΟΝ. The architectural background is slightly damaged. Helena stands in front of it to the left. She is imperially dressed with a high crown. She extends her hands towards Judas, who is represented as a young man wearing a tunic; he holds his arms crossed in front of him. The style of their facial features suggests that the artist had little familiarity with Byzantine artistic tradition, and the whole composition is banal.

The second scene, damaged in the upper and lower parts, is more complex (Fig. 109). The accompanying inscription only gives Helena's name. The empress stands again to the left; her facial features are similar to those in the preceding scene. However, this time she is haloed and her *loros* is decorated with a cross, common in her iconography but out of place in this scene which is that of the actual Invention of the Cross. She extends her arms towards the man who is unearthing a clearly visible three-armed Cross. There are traces of another cross beside it, but the damage to the painting here is considerable. The facial features of the man unearthing the Cross resemble those of Judas in the preceding painting, but he is differently dressed with his head covered and a dark tunic. Two other figures stand behind him. The head of the one to the right has been destroyed; the other, with a long, narrow face and white hair and beard is probably Macarius, the bishop who accompanied Helena at the Invention. The style and iconography of both these paintings are rudimentary.

<sup>13</sup> *Eadem*, p. 155, et seq.

## Saint George, Ano Viannos, Viannos, Herakleion

The paintings in this church, of exceptionally high quality, can be dated to 1401 by an inscription, according to which the patron George Damoro employed Ioannis Mousouros to execute them in that year.<sup>14</sup> The representation here of the Exaltation of the Cross merits particular attention, by reason not only of the presence of an emperor and empress, who are likely to be Constantine and Helena, but also of the erudite and unusual nature of the iconography. This is somewhat complex (Fig. 107).

The essential elements of the Exaltation of the Cross, as represented here, may be found in the painting, probably slightly earlier, in the church of Saint Paraskevi situated between the monastery of Arkadi and the village of Eleutherna, Mylopotamos (Fig. 111). It dates from about 1400.<sup>15</sup> However, here no emperor and empress are represented in the scene which is situated in the northern part of the barrel vault of the West bay; unfortunately it is in a poor state of preservation. In both paintings the figure of a bishop can be distinguished standing on a pedestal in the middle of the scene, wearing a *polystaurion*, and holding a cross. The bishop in Ano Viannos holds a large Cross with the Crown of Thorns suspended from it, while the lance, sponge and four nails are also represented. Two angels fly above him holding the *mandorla* which surrounds the Cross. Above this, two further figures, probably also angels, hold up another *mandorla*, which surrounds the *Hetoimasia*, the Throne of Judgement, prepared for Christ's second Parousia; into a dove is placed on it. Figures stand to the left and right of the officiating bishops, while to the right are the two imperial figures. In the foreground to the left is a small figure dressed in black, who holds a book inscribed [ΣΤ]ΑΥΡΟ(Ν) ΑΝΗΨΟΥΜΕΝΟΝ (the Elevated Cross).

The Exaltation of the Cross was represented a number of times in Byzantine art. The earliest surviving example is in the *Menologion*

illuminated for Basil II (976-1025), Vatican *græc.* 1613, p. 35<sup>16</sup> (Fig. 107). The feast, celebrated on September 14th, supposedly commemorated the recovery of the relic of the Cross by the emperor Heraclius (610-641), but anachronistically Saint John Chrysostom often figures in representations of the ceremony as the bishop who exalts the Cross. The scene figures in illuminated liturgical manuscripts such as the Calendar Vatican *græc.* 1156, f. 250v<sup>17</sup> (Fig. 274). In these miniatures, the iconography is simple. A haloed bishop wearing a *polystaurion* stands at the top of an *ambo*, holding a small two-armed cross. The representation is similar in marginal Psalters, starting in 1066 with the Theodore Psalter, London Add. 19352, f. 131v, where it illustrates Psalm 98,5: "Exalt (ὑψοῦτε) the Lord our God" (Fig. 272). It was obviously inspired by the resemblance to the term exaltation (ὑψωση).<sup>18</sup> A full account of the rite is given in the *De cerimoniis*,<sup>19</sup> according to which the emperor took part, standing on the steps of the *ambo*. However, he rarely figures in representations of the rite except at Gračanica.<sup>20</sup>

The *ambo*, at least by the 8th century, was a normal part of the church. References are made to it in the literary sources. For example, in the *Life* of Basil I, written between 810 and 814, it is recounted how the ex-patriarch Constantine V (741-755), after being beaten up until he could not stand, was carried on a litter into Saint Sophia where he was taken up to the *ambo*.<sup>21</sup> It is described in the *Hermeneia*.<sup>22</sup> However, the simplest way to form an idea of the appearance of the *ambo* is to examine how it was represented in pictures. There are two examples in Vatican *græc.* 1613, one, already cited, p. 35, of which the Exaltation is the

<sup>16</sup> S. Der Nersessian, "La fête de l'Exaltation de la Croix", *Annuaire de l'Institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales et slaves* 10, 1950, p. 193-198; Walter, *Art and Ritual*, p. 154-155 and index *sub verbo*. Most recently, Klein, *Constantine*, p. 45-50.

<sup>17</sup> Walter, *Art and Ritual*, p. 52, 62, figure 45.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 154. Here an inscription actually names the bishop John Chrysostom. For other marginal Psalters, p. 155, note 207.

<sup>19</sup> Constantine Porphyrogénète, *Livre des cérémonies*, edited by A. Vogt, Paris 1935-1940, I, p. 116-118.

<sup>20</sup> Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, p. 94; Vojislav Đurić, *Vizantijske Freske u Jugoslaviji*, Belgrade 1974, p. 52, 104, note 54.

<sup>21</sup> Theophanes, *Chronographia continuata*, PG 109, 441.

<sup>22</sup> Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, p. 90.

<sup>14</sup> Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, p. 90-97; P. Papamastorakis, "Η ένταξη των προεπισκοπικών της Θεοτόκου και της Ὑψωσης του Σταυροῦ σε ένα ιδιότυπο εικονογραφικό κύκλο στον Ἄγιο Γεώργιο Βιάννου Κρήτης," *DChAH*, Series IV, Vol. 14, 1987-1988, p. 328, Spatharakis, *Dated*, 148-155, n° 50, figs. 131-134.

<sup>15</sup> Spatharakis, *Rethymnon*, p. 85-90, figure 80.



subject (Fig. 107), and another, p. 131, portraying the Martyrdom of Saint James, the first Bishop of Jerusalem (Fig. 276). He is being struck down on the steps of the *ambo*. That Christian churches dating from the first century of our era had an *ambo* is a more than implausible supposition. The artist has perpetrated an anachronism like that of performing *Hamlet* today in modern dress. It is important not to forget that iconography is a "language" which is not intended to be a historical record of events as they actually took place but rather of their significance.

The *ambo*, in fact was a kind of platform up to which steps led up on either side, leaving an arch through which it was possible to pass. It was situated at the crossing between the nave and the sanctuary. It could be used for other rites than the Exaltation of the Cross, for example the commemorative reading of the Synodikon of Orthodoxy on the first Sunday of Lent. Two representations of this rite may be cited. One in the Lectionary Dionysiou 587, f. 43, is simple, with a minimum of detail<sup>23</sup> (Fig. 112). The other, a pendant to the series of pictures of the seven ecumenical Councils on the outer wall of the church of Saint Sozomenus, Galata, in Cyprus, dating from 1513, is far more complex<sup>24</sup> (Fig. 113). It is, so far as I know, unpublished. Yet, apart from its relevance to the present study, it is as remarkable an example of erudite Byzantine iconography as the Exaltation at Viannos. The figure in clerical dress standing on the *ambo* conventionally holds an outstretched scroll. However, the scene is embellished by a considerable number of clergy standing to the left. Of most of them only the head is visible, but the two patriarchs in the front row are identified as Germanos and Methodios by their names inscribed in black on their haloes. It was Methodios who

instituted the Synodikon of Orthodoxy in March 843.<sup>25</sup> Consequently his presence needs no further explanation. However, that of Germanos (715-730), the first patriarch to take decisive action against those who favoured the elimination of icons,<sup>26</sup> is a patent (and deliberate) anachronism. It confirms that the picture is to be interpreted theologically rather than historically as a commemoration not only of the victory of the iconophiles but also of their entire combat against the iconoclasts. A further embellishment is the presence to the right of a haloed emperor holding a cross with an empress standing behind him. Unfortunately most of the inscriptions are somewhat damaged, but some of them can be read. At the top of the picture end on the scroll are the opening words of the Synodikon. Above the emperor is inscribed Ο ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ, and above the empress Η ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΑ.<sup>27</sup> Unfortunately no clue is given as to the identity of the two imperial figures. They could be Michael III (842-862), the reigning emperor at the time of the promulgation of the Synodikon, and his mother Theodora who acted as regent, since Michael III was only seven years old in 843.<sup>28</sup> Nearly seven hundred years after the event, the Byzantines might not have demurred at the representation of the child emperor as an adult. However, another possible explanation – and one of the reasons for this digression – is that the emperor is Constantine I who is accompanied by his mother Helena. There is no reason for Michael III to hold a cross, while for Constantine it is entirely appropriate. The emperor would be present as the archetypal personification of Orthodoxy, so giving an even wider interpretation to the Synodikon than the triumph of the iconophiles. It is rather the supreme expression of Christian dogma, imposed by Constantine I at the first Council of Nicaea, represented in the first scene of this unusually remarkable series of paintings, and confirmed in the last scene by his presence. It should be noted that, whereas at Saint Sozomenus, painted a century later, the *ambo* is represented correctly, in the two Cretan churches a simple platform has been substituted. A possible explanation might be that either the *ambo*

<sup>23</sup> Walter, "The Date and Content of the Dionysiou Lectionary", *DChAH*, Series IV, Vol. 16, 1991-1992; reprinted; *Pictures as Language*, p. 138. *Athos*, vol. I, fig. 220.

<sup>24</sup> Walter, "The Names of the Council Fathers at Saint Sozomenus, Cyprus", *REB* 28, 1970, p. 189-206; reprinted; *Studies in Byzantine Iconography*, n° VI: Andreas and Judith Stylianou, *The Painted Churches of Cyprus. Treasures of Byzantine Art*, London 1985, p. 86-88. *Ibid. sup.*, "The Emperor Constantine and the First Council of Nicaea".

<sup>25</sup> G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, English edition, Oxford 1956, p. 195.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 144.

<sup>27</sup> I thank Dr Joseph Munitiz for reading the inscriptions.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 194.

was unknown in Crete or that, by the time that these two churches were decorated, it had fallen there into desuetude.

A unique iconographical element in the Exaltation of the Cross at Ano Viannos is the presence of the *Hetoimasia* above the cross. The *Hetoimasia*, the Throne ready for Christ's second *Parousia*, corresponds exactly to Psalm 9, 7: Ἐτοίμασεν ἐν κρίσει τὸν θρόνον αὐτοῦ (He [The Lord] has set up his throne in judgment), although there is no corresponding phrase in the New Testament. The earliest extant – and probably the first – representation of the *Hetoimasia* is in Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, dating from the pontificate of pope Sixtus III (432–440)<sup>29</sup> (Fig. 88). On the footstool of the throne, which is richly studded with jewels, the scroll with seven seals is placed; above it a cross is depicted, symbolizing Christ. In a later mosaic, that in the now-destroyed church of the Domition in Nicaea, the cross is substituted by another symbol of Christ, the Gospel book. The scroll seen in Santa Maria Maggiore is omitted here, but the Holy Spirit in its usual form of a dove is added above the book (Fig. 273). Another outstanding example of *Hetoimasia* is the steatite in the Louvre from ca 1000 A.D., studied and published by Jannic Durand,<sup>30</sup> (Fig. 116). Both the cross and the Gospel book are depicted on the throne, as well as two objects from the *arma Christi*, the lance and the sponge. The throne is flanked by the archangels Michael and Gabriel in imperial costume with the *loros*. Exceptionally, four warrior saints appear in the lower part of the scene, clad in court ceremonial garments with the left hand covered and holding a cross in the right hand. They are, from left to right, Demetrius, Theodore, George and Procopius. The inscription above them mentions that these martyrs expect to inherit their reward, by which the allusion to the *Hetoimasia* as the throne of the Last Judgement is clearly expressed. The *Hetoimasia* appears in a variety of contexts, of which the most appropriate was in scenes of the Last Judgement, where Adam and Eve are represented

kneeling before it.<sup>31</sup> There is considerable variety in matters of detail. A renowned example is that in the Cathedral of Torcello from ca. 1200 A.D.<sup>32</sup> (Figs. 114–115). The iconography of the throne applied here is almost identical to that of the steatite in the Louvre. The Crown of Thorns hanging from the cross has been added to the mosaic of Torcello. At Viannos, only a dove, representing the Holy Spirit, is placed on the throne. The reason for introducing the *Hetoimasia* into the scene is not self evident. Perhaps it is intended to give a supernatural connotation to the iconography, while the presence of Constantine and Helena recall their part in establishing public veneration of the Cross. It is regrettable that so little is known about the painting's patron and artist (George Damoro and Ioannis Mousouros), whose erudite grasp of the significance of iconography would have made the Exaltation of the Cross at Viannos remarkable in any place or period in Byzantine tradition.

#### Saint Constantine, Drymiskos, Agios Vasileios, Rethymnon

In this church in the region of Rethymnon, dated about 1400, Constantine is represented on horseback<sup>33</sup> (Figs. 117). There is nothing unusual about this. It was invariable in scenes of the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. Other examples, statues, statuettes and paintings, have already been noted above.<sup>34</sup> However, although he was undoubtedly a warrior saint and represented as such, as has been noted, in the marginal Psalters, he does not often appear elsewhere in the company of others. Here he accompanies Saint George and wears a crown.

Warrior saints together on horseback was an established iconographical type, occurring in Cappadocia as early as the ninth

<sup>29</sup> Walter, *Conciles*, p. 74–75, figure 113, p. 230.

<sup>30</sup> J. Durand, "La steatite de l'Hétimasia," *La revue du Louvre et des Musées de France* 3, 1988, p. 190–194, fig. 3. *Idem* in *Byzance*, p. 269–270, n° 175, fig. 175, with bibliography. Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, 1, *Byzantine Icons in steatite*, Vienna 1985, p. 138–139 n° 46, pl. 28, fig. 46, p. 95–96, n° 3, with transcriptions of the inscriptions.

<sup>31</sup> Gordana Babić, "Les discussions christologiques et le décor des églises byzantines au XIIe siècle", *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 2, 1968, p. 384–386.

<sup>32</sup> R. Polacco, *La Cattedrale di Torcello*, Venice 1984, pls. 63 and 91.

<sup>33</sup> Vasilaki, *Constantine*, p. 81.

<sup>34</sup> *Vid. sup.*, "Basil I and Constantine", Appendix, 2. "Constantine a warrior on horseback".

century in Yılanlı kilise on Hasan Dağı.<sup>35</sup> In the church of Saint Eustathius (Göreme 11), dating from the tenth century, Constantine is represented in the company of three warrior saints, all on horseback. The Cretan artists therefore had precedents for representing Constantine in this way, although not wearing a crown. Other examples may be noted in the early fourteenth-century church of Christ at Kasano, and that of the Transfiguration at Sklavopoula Selino, dating from the second half of the fourteenth century.<sup>36</sup>

### Saint Constantine, Avdou, Pedias, Herakleion

The paintings in this church, dating from 1445, are in particularly poor condition.<sup>37</sup> They include the Exaltation of the Cross and other unidentifiable scenes from the *Life* of Constantine. A single picture of Constantine enthroned is well preserved (Fig. 118). Behind him stands a guard holding a sword. This iconography occurs elsewhere for warrior saints.<sup>38</sup>

### Saint Constantine, Agios Konstantinos, Rethymon, Rethymnon

The church in this village, dedicated to Saint Constantine, contains an icon signed by the painter and priest Manuel and dated to 1732. Christ is represented to the left; to the right Saints Constantine and Helena, crowned and haloed, uphold between them a three barred Cross (Figs. 119-120). They are surrounded by ten biographical scenes so composing a conventional biographical icon.<sup>39</sup> These scenes are not set out in

<sup>35</sup> Walter, *Warrior Saints*, p. 272. Melias and John I Tzimisces are also represented as armed warriors on horseback in procession in the Pigeon House at Cavaşi (Figs. 87 and 266-267).

<sup>36</sup> Vasilaki, *Constantine*, p. 81, note 60.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 82, figure 32b; Spatharakis, *Dated*, p. 197-199.

<sup>38</sup> A. Dumitrescu, "Une iconographie peu habituelle: les saints militaires ségrant. Le cas de Saint-Nicolas d'Arges", *Byzantion* 59, 1989, p. 48-63.

<sup>39</sup> This icon measures 122 x 95 cm. Vasilaki, *Constantine*, p. 83, figures 34-35, gives some cursory information about this icon, which is not always correct.

chronologically correct order. Some are obviously of Latin origin, while the interpretation of others is necessarily conjectural. They are described here from left to right according to their level on the icon.

On the top level, n° 1, the emperor stands in the centre with his arms crossed; to his left stands a group of figures, civilly dressed and seemingly turned away. To his right stands a group of figures in military dress; they face the emperor wielding raised swords. In the background there is a building, while, to the extreme right, there is an idol shrine containing a representation of the sun placed on top of a column. In front of it, behind the military figures, flames rise from a two handled jar. It seems that this picture was inspired by the cult of the *Sol invictus*, which is probably being rejected. Unfortunately, no similar representation of this cult is known to me.<sup>40</sup>

N° 2 represents the preparations for the Battle of the Milvian Bridge (Fig. 121). In the lower part to the right, a figure in imperial dress, presumably Constantine, stands before a tent, no doubt his headquarters, with his right arm outstretched, a regular sign of authority in Byzantine iconography. Other figures stand there, one blowing a horn, while a mass of soldiers, some holding spears and others banners, is placed behind the tent. In the sky, above Constantine, is a black semi-circle marked with a cross and the inscription: EN TOYTO NIKA. Probably Constantine is looking upwards towards it. His cavalry, led by two soldiers each holding a standard surmounted by a cross in his right hand, advances towards the bridge. On the opposite bank the Roman army is massed, some on horseback with banners, others on foot with spears, while their commander, Maxentius, is enthroned in a tent to the extreme left.

N° 3 portrays in rather less detail the rout of the army of Maxentius (Fig. 122). Some of his soldiers have reached the further bank of the river; others have fallen into the water. The Milvian Bridge is broken. Constantine's troops are in various postures while Constantine himself is lying in bed in a tent, protected by a guard. Beside Constantine is a crucifix with Christ haloed. The significance of this detail might be

<sup>40</sup> For Constantine's cult of the *Sol invictus* and its iconography, *vid. sup.*, "The Life of Constantine" and "The Art of Constantine's Reign".



explained conjecturally as a possible dream in which it is revealed to Constantine that his victory is tantamount to the triumph of Christianity. On the next level down there are two scenes which are chronologically displaced. N° 5, to the right of the central portrait, shows Saints Peter and Paul appearing to Constantine in a dream (Fig. 123). This dream led to Constantine's baptism by a pope (Sylvester). The baptism is portrayed in n° 4, to the left of the central portrait (Fig. 124). The emperor stands naked in a font, while Sylvester, liturgically dressed, baptises him. The legend that he was baptised by a pope passed into Byzantine tradition<sup>41</sup>, but not the preceding vision of Saints Peter and Paul. The dream was recounted in the West in the *Legenda sancti Sylvestri*.<sup>42</sup> Constantine, suffering from leprosy, saw the two saints in a dream. He sought out pope Sylvester who showed him an icon of the two saints. The emperor recognised them. This led to his conversion to Christianity and to his baptism. When he left the font, his leprosy was cured. The two scenes on the next level below have to be interpreted conjecturally. In n° 6, an angel stands beside the emperor, while a man is crouching in front of them apparently examining the ground (Fig. 125). In n° 7, there is a domed building like a church in the background (Fig. 126). In the foreground, there are two men; one wielding a spade and the other an axe. It has been suggested that the scenes refer to the construction of a church outside the walls of Constantinople, the *Michaelion*; the archangel Michael is showing Constantine where it should be constructed.<sup>43</sup>

On the lowest level, n° 8 and n° 10, to left and right, make a pair. They portray the lying in state of Constantine and Helena (Figs. 126-127). Both scenes follow the iconographical type of the Dormition. In n° 8, the empress is attended by a group of bishops, one of whom swings a censor, while another member of the clergy holds a candle. Another candle burns in the foreground. N° 10, Constantine's lying in state, is virtually the same. However, in his case a bearded figure wearing a head

dress stands behind the bier. His identity as a leading clerical or lay personage is not made clear.

Finally, n° 9, placed between n° 8 and n° 10, represents the First Council of Nicaea (Fig. 127). The enthroned Gospel Book presides. Constantine is enthroned to the left of it, the only haloed figure. The condemned heretic, Arius, lies in the foreground, holding his hands over his ears so as to be deaf to the decisions of the council. A scroll beside him is inscribed with his name. One bishop, seated to the right, stands out from the others, because he is wearing red vestments with a tiara on his head. Again, his identity is not made clear. The iconography is traditional resembling notably the icon painted by Michael Damaskinos dated 1591. Since this icon was in the monastery of Saint Antony at Vrontisi in Crete, it could have been known to the painter of our icon.<sup>44</sup>

This icon provides a splendid conclusion, not only to the section devoted to Constantine in Crete but also to the whole study. The paintings of Constantine in Crete are too heterogeneous to be treated as constituting a specific "school". There is, nevertheless, a common element. They were executed when Crete was no longer under Byzantine suzerainty; in consequence they are devoid of any imperial import. The Cretans evidently revered Constantine and Helena for the saintly qualities which they attributed to them, particularly their devotion to the Cross. Cretan artists were obviously familiar with a variety of legends and iconographical traditions, both Greek and Latin, but they displayed no interest in Constantine as a secular imperial figure.

It is important to stress the fact that the iconography of Constantine falls into two clearly defined parts. In the first, he is a secular figure, a model for succeeding rulers. However, as Kazhdan observed, the Byzantines after the Triumph of Orthodoxy lost interest in the secular Constantine. What he failed to observe was that subsequently there was a renewed and considerably increased interest in Constantine as an exemplar of saintliness. This attitude to him appears most clearly and most explicitly in Manuel's pictorial hagiography, making it worthy of comparison with the most outstanding literary *Lives* of saints.

<sup>41</sup> It was reported by John Malalas, *vid. sup.*, "The Legend of Constantine".

<sup>42</sup> The *Legend*, published by Mombritius in 1480, is peculiarly difficult of access. For a condensed version of the relevant passage, *vid.* my article, "Papal Political Imagery in the Medieval Lateran Palace", *CahArch* 20, 1970, p. 171 (with bibliography), reprinted, *Prayer and Power*, VIIa.

<sup>43</sup> G. T. Armstrong, "Constantine's Churches", *Gesta* 6, 1967, p. 6, n° 23.

<sup>44</sup> *Id. sup.*, "The emperor Constantine I and the First Council of Nicaea".



## INTRODUCTION

As I explained in the epilogue to my earlier study of the *Warrior Saints*, a number of aspects of its overall theme merited further investigation. The most obvious one was the Emperor Constantine, who, beside his many other attributes, was indeed both a warrior and a saint! However, there were other themes which merited an excursus. The articles which I had already published about them elsewhere required, for differing reasons, some measure of revision. They receive it in this book.

The first excursus on the *maniakion* or *torc* is a developed study of the well known attribute of the two warrior saints, Sergius and Bacchus. It will be seen that its interest extends far more widely than their use of it.

The second excursus on the acronym IC XC NI KA takes as its starting point the publications of two scholars, now deceased, whose erudition is universally acknowledged, Anatole Frolov and Gordana Babić. However, since their time much material which was unknown to them has become available. Consequently I have been able to provide a more exhaustive examination and interpretation of the acronym than was possible for them.

The third excursus is a relatively short exegesis of an inscription on a stone, whose original use is unknown. It is now built into the wall of the church at Kardžali, Bulgaria.

The remaining articles, together with the hitherto unpublished text of a lecture have been grouped together under the heading *Severed Heads and Heads as Trophies*. Their common theme is the severed head, whose place in Antique legend and art is first examined, followed by a brief account of its place in Western hagiography in the Middle Ages (material which was included in my unpublished lecture). Then three headless (*kephalophoros*) martyrs in Eastern tradition are investigated. Saint George *kephalophoros* is a diffuse and complex subject, while Saints John Vladimir and Zosimos have hitherto received little attention from Western scholars.

## THE MANIAKION OR TORC IN BYZANTINE TRADITION

While preparing a general study of Byzantine warrior saints<sup>1</sup>, I had naturally to turn my attention to Saints Sergius and Bacchus. I could hardly fail to observe that they were often, but not always, represented wearing a torc, an ornament around their necks. This was rarely the case with the other warrior saints. The torc is, of course, well known to many Byzantinists, but sometimes they pay little attention to it. Since it is a complex subject, I preferred only to mention it in my above mentioned study, reserving fuller discussion to an excursus<sup>2</sup>.

I begin by a consideration of the terms used to designate this neck ornament in the literary sources and of what these tell us about it. The most common term in Byzantine texts is *μανιάκιον*. However, according to Liddell and Scott, this is a diminutive form of the classical *μανίακη(ς)*; they define it as a necklace – torc – worn by Persians and Gauls. The word occurs in Esdras 3, 6 (LXX) in an account of a banquet given by king Darius of Persia. Three young men of his personal bodyguard disputed what was the strongest influence in life. The one whose answer was judged best would receive, among other privileges, the right to wear a chain about his neck. Similarly, at the court of Baltasar, Daniel was offered the privilege of being clothed in purple and wearing a golden chain (*μανιάκη(ς)*) about his neck if he interpreted the mysterious writing on the wall (Daniel 5,16, LXX). Related terms were *κλύς* and *στρεπτός*<sup>3</sup>. Pseudo-Codinus explained that, in his time, *μανιάκον* had changed its meaning; it was used to signify sleeve. The term had been

<sup>1</sup> Ch. Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition*, London 2003.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, previous note, p. 146, note 3, p. 153-154. This article is a modified form of the excursus published in *REB* 59 2001, p. 179-192.

<sup>3</sup> Pseudo-Kodinos, *Traité des offices*, edited by J. Verpeaux, Paris 1976, p. 219.



replaced by σπειρόν. Virgil wrote that young Trojan warriors wore a circle of twisted gold around their necks (Aeneid V, 558-559). However, Virgil did not use the word torques, the Latin equivalent of μανιάκιον, from which our modern word torc derives.<sup>4</sup>

Those who have studied the torc do not doubt that its use was not endemic in Roman or Hellenic tradition. It was introduced from surrounding peoples, notably the Persians, Sassanians and Gauls. There are numerous artefacts which illustrate the torc. The Romans were aware that the Persians wore it. In the celebrated mosaic in Pompeii of the Battle of Issus, now in the Archaeological Museum in Naples, of Alexander the Great fighting Darius, with members of his retinue, they are represented wearing the torc<sup>5</sup> (Figs. 130-131). The Romans were also aware that the Gauls wore the torc, as is evident from the equally celebrated statue of the dying Gaul in the Museo Capitolino (Fig. 277). It is a Roman copy in marble of a Hellenistic bronze statue, most probably commissioned by Attalus I, king of Pergamum, after his victory on the Gauls in 228 B.C. The barbarian is represented totally naked but he wears his torc.<sup>6</sup>

Here are some examples of the torc on Sassanian and Gallic artefacts. A torc with a jewel suspended from it is worn by the hunting princely rider Bahram Gur on the Sassanian plate in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (3rd century?)<sup>7</sup> and the silver plate, partially gilded, in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, showing Shapur II (310-379), identifiable by his peculiar crown, hunting on horseback<sup>8</sup> (Figs. 279 and 132). There are many examples from Gaul in the Musée des Antiquités

<sup>4</sup> S. Reinach, *Torques*, in *Dictionnaire des Antiquités grecques et romaines*, V, 376-379.

<sup>5</sup> Andrieu, B., *Das Alexandermosaik aus Pompeii*, Recklinghausen, 1977, figs. 14 and 17.

<sup>6</sup> Havelock, Christine M., *Hellenistic Kunst. Von Alexander dem Grossen bis Kaiser Augustus*, Vienna and Munich 1971, p. 134-136, fig. 142.

<sup>7</sup> Walter, *Warrior Saints*, fig. 15.

<sup>8</sup> Kraus, Theodor, *Das Römische Weltreich*, Berlin 1967, p. 297, pl. XXXII. For further examples, *vid.* R. Gersham, *Persian Art*, Paris 1953, plates 205, 208, 209, 280, 281, 287, 289; N.G. Garsoian, 'The Iranian Substratum of the Agat'angelos Cycle', *East of Byzantium, Syria and Armenia in the Formative Period*, Washington DC, 1982, p. 151-174, especially p. 131, figures 5-8.

nationales at St-Germain-en-Laye<sup>9</sup>. Besides statues, probably of gods (Fig. 278), there are also actual torcs, dating from the 7th century B.C. to the 1st century A.D. They have different forms, sometimes open at the front, sometimes a complete circle with a jewel or jewels in front. Two torcs from La Tène, n° 34 and n° 36, are of special interest, because they are ornamented with three jewels, a form which was taken up on the Byzantine μανιάκιον.

How the torc came into favour in late Roman and early Byzantine society is obscure. The figure leading the horses, the *strator* on the arch at Lepcis Magna wears a torc, with a circle suspended from it<sup>10</sup> (Fig. 280). According to M.P. Speidel, torcs were used in the late Roman army to reward valorous officers<sup>11</sup>. In fact, Reinach had already cited Pliny's *Historia naturalis* in favour of this. A tribune called Licinius Deutatus who fought in 120 battles received 83 torcs<sup>12</sup>. It may be that the torc was still a reward for valour in Constantine's time, when a figure wearing it was represented on his Arch in Rome<sup>13</sup>. Another sign of its acceptance is the elevation of Julian at Lutetia Parisiorum in 361<sup>14</sup>. He was surrounded by Gauls, one of whom lent his torc to be used as a crown. Anastasius II (713-715) was also elevated to the imperial throne by being raised on a shield and having a torc placed on his head<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> *Catalogue of Museum, Paris 1998*, especially n° 102, a torc with two jewels; n° 113, a god from Bouray. *Vid.* also *A la rencontre des Dieux gaulois*, Catalogue of exhibition at Saint-Germain-en Laye, 1999, p. 19, 29, 81-81.

<sup>10</sup> Ch. Walter, 'The Dextrarum junctio of Lepcis Magna in relation to the iconography of marriage', *Antiquités africaines* 14, 1979, p. 271-283; reprinted, *Prayer and Power*, V.

<sup>11</sup> M.P. Speidel, 'Late Roman Military Decorations: Neck- and Wrist-bands', *Antiquité tardive* 4, 1996, p. 235-243, especially p. 236-239.

<sup>12</sup> Reinach, *Torques*, *art. cit. supra*; Pliny, *Historia naturalis* XXXIII 10, VIII 29.

<sup>13</sup> H.P. L'Orange, *Der spätantike Bildschmuck des Konstantinbogen*, Berlin 1939, p. 42, 76, pl. 12, 13.

<sup>14</sup> W. Ensslin, 'Zur Torqueskrönung und Schilderhebung bei der Kaiserwahl' *Klio* 35, 1942, p. 268-298; Ch. Walter, 'Raising on a shield in Byzantine Iconography', *REB* 33, 1975, p. 158; reprinted *Studies in Byzantine Iconography*, London 1977, p. 158. There are various accounts of this ceremony, *ibidem*, p. 158, notes 82, 83, 84.

<sup>15</sup> *De ceremoniis*, 1952, Bonn, p. 423 lines 5-8.

The torc would also have been worn as a personal ornament just as it is by youths in our days. Cases can be cited of wealthy men, youths of whose entourage wore torcs, along with other ornaments. Eusebius of Alexandria, describing the luxury of the wealthy, wrote that the members of their retinue wore "small necklaces" (μανυάκια, ὀφιοτόκους, ψεῦδος)<sup>16</sup>. Abbot Alexander's father possessed a thousand slaves "all wearing *maniakia*"<sup>17</sup>. The practice did not meet with ecclesiastical approval. As late as the end of the sixth century, the synod of Aquileia addressed a letter to the emperors Gratian, Valentinian and Theodosius, complaining that soldiers of the Roman army, following the example of foreigners, dared to wear "*torquem et brachiales, impietate gothica profanatos*", Ambrose of Milan, present at the synod, went further. He deplored the presence of lubricious youths (*adolescentes lubricos*) at official banquets, "*aureis torquibus nitent colla*"<sup>18</sup>.

Thus the torc was worn for various reasons, as a privilege of office, a sign of rank, a reward for valour or a personal ornament, before it came into official use in Byzantine society and was accepted in imperial, if not ecclesiastical, circles. Even so, its significance is not always clear. For example, some members of Justinian's – but not Theodora's – retinue are represented wearing torcs in the Donatun mosaic in San Vitale, Ravenna<sup>19</sup> (Fig. 133). They also carry spears, so that they must be members of the emperor's personal guard. The torc of the guard nearest to Justinian can be seen to have a round, empty circle at the front, inviting comparison with the *strator* on the arch at Lepcis Magna<sup>20</sup> (Fig. 280).

Further iconographical evidence is provided by the miniature of Pilate sitting in judgement in the Rossano Gospels, f. 8, probably illuminated in the second half of the sixth century (Fig. 134). The two standard bearers

<sup>16</sup> *Homilia* 21, PG 86, 444b.

<sup>17</sup> *Apophthegmata Patrum* (Appendix ad Palladium), PG 65, 104a, dating from the fifth or sixth century.

<sup>18</sup> *Epistola concilii Aquilejensi ad Gratianum, Valentinianum et Theodosium imperatores*, Mansi III, 617.

<sup>19</sup> Illustrated so often, as recently by J. Durand, *L'art byzantin*, Paris 1999, p. 32.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Walter, "The Dextrarum junctio of Lepcis Magna in relation to the iconography of marriage", *Antiquities africanas* 14, 1979, p. 271-283; reprinted, *Prayer and Power*, V.

behind his throne wear torcs, which are simple circlets with nothing suspended from them<sup>21</sup>. Speidel thought that the torc became a distinctive attribute of standard bearers<sup>22</sup>. There is literary evidence that standard bearers did wear torcs in the poem about Emeterius and Chelidonius, putatively warrior saints<sup>23</sup>, in the *Peristephanon* of Prudentius<sup>24</sup>. These two soldiers, bearers of dragon standards, deserted for the Cross. They demanded that the *aureos torques* which they had earned by their bravery, be taken off. Speidel suggested that the torc may not have been an attribute of standard bearers but rather that they were chosen among those who had earned it as a reward for their valour. Either hypothesis is possible, because Ammianus simply wrote that *draconarii* wore the torc<sup>25</sup>.

Two secular examples may be cited, one a diptych in the State Library, Munich, dated about 450, on the right side of which a guard, holding a spear, wears a one-lobed torc around his neck<sup>26</sup> (Fig. 284), and the other the *missorium* of Theodosius I in the Real Academia de la Historia, Madrid<sup>27</sup> (Figs. 282-283). In the Vienna *Genesis*, f. 18v, two guards, one wearing a torc with a single jewel, figure in the miniature which illustrates Joseph interpreting Pharaoh's dreams. *Genesis* 41, 29<sup>28</sup>. The *Homilies* of Gregory of Nazianzus, Paris *graec.* 510, contain two

<sup>21</sup> A. Muñoz, *Il codice purpureo di Rossano e il frammento sinopense*, Rome 1907; for an excellent reproduction, Durand, *L'art byzantin*, p. 51.

<sup>22</sup> M.P. Speidel, "The Master of Dragon Standard and the Golden Torc: An inscription from Prusias and Prudentius' *Peristephanon*", *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 115, 1985, p. 283.

<sup>23</sup> Walter, *Warrior Saints*, p. 249-250.

<sup>24</sup> Prudentius, *Peristephanon*, composed about 400, edited by J. Bergman, Vienna 1926; translated by H.J. Thomson, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1952, p. 102-103.

<sup>25</sup> Speidel, *art. cit.*, citing A. Müller, "Militaria aus Ammianus Marcellinus", *Philologus* 64, 1905, p. 537-632.

<sup>26</sup> R. Delbrück, *Die Consulardiptychen und verwandte Denkmäler*, Berlin/Leipzig 1929.

<sup>27</sup> *Age of Spirituality*, n° 64, p. 74-76, with bibliography.

<sup>28</sup> H. Gerstinger, *Die Wiener Genesis*, Vienna (no date), plate 36.

miniatures with figures wearing torcs, on f. 239 and f. 374v<sup>29</sup>. On f. 239, Gregory and the emperor Theodosius conversing, the two imperial bodyguards carry swords and wear torcs with two jewels suspended from them. On f. 374v, in the central part of the miniature, Julian sacrificing to the gods, the torc with three jewels suspended from it is clearly visible on one of the emperor's bodyguards. It is notable that Brubaker, in her exhaustive study of the manuscript, like so many historians of Byzantine art, makes no allusion to the torcs!

For more direct information about them, we have to turn to the *De ceremoniis*, where, in L10 concerning the ritual for Easter Monday, it is told that the "στρατηγοὶ καὶ οὐδὲτοι φοροῦσιν μανιάκια"<sup>30</sup>. The torcs are not described here. Later, however, there are two accounts of the promotion of the *protospatharius*. He knelt at the emperors' feet, which he kissed. Then a torc, ornamented with gems, was placed around his neck<sup>31</sup>. Pseudo-Codinus gave a slightly fuller description: the torc was made of twisted gold with three hanging jewels<sup>32</sup>. He added that generals (*στρατηγοί*) wore a torc<sup>33</sup>.

The preceding considerations should help us to resolve the most important question concerning the torc: its significance in the iconography of Saints Sergius and Bacchus. It is unnecessary to enter into the detail of their martyrdom and cult. This has already been done<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> H. Omont, *Miniatures des plus anciens manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris (second edition) 1929, p. 24, plate 27; p. 29, plate 53. Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, p. 133-134, figure 27; p. 230, figure 39.

<sup>30</sup> Constantine Porphyrogenète, *Le livre des cérémonies*, edited by Vogt, Paris 1935, Texte I, p. 73, Commentaire I, p. 114.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, edited Vogt 68, II, p. 84 = Bonn I, p. 275; Bonn I, p. 709. Constantine Porphyrogenitus also recounted in *De administrando imperio*, edited by Gy. Moravcsik and R.H.J. Jenkins, Washington 1967, p. 108-109, that the emir of Persia wore a necklace like a torc, but with the Koran on tablets suspended from it. They were intended to be prophylactic!

<sup>32</sup> Pseudo-Codinus, *Traité des offices*, p. 199-200. He added that when tyrants obliged martyrs (warrior saints) to leave the army, they were stripped of their torc along with their cincture.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 206.

<sup>34</sup> Walther, *Warrior Saints*, p. 146-162; Elizabeth Key Fowden, *The Barbarian Plain. Saint Sergius Between Rome and Iran*, University of California Press, London 1999, especially p. 29-44.

We can limit ourselves to asking: which, among the reasons noted above, explains why they were entitled to wear the torc? Certainly their torcs were not the ornaments of lubricious youths! Their *Passio antiquior* tells us that they were valiant soldiers. They also held high office as members of the *schola gentilium*, one of the units of the imperial bodyguard, Sergius as *primicerius* and Bacchus as *secundarius*. Both were favoured by the emperor. However, can we know whether their torcs were their reward for valour in battle, or were they bestowed on them by the emperor when they were appointed to his bodyguard? In the IVth century, the former explanation seems more likely, since the bestowal of a torc in court ritual had probably not yet become customary.

In the iconography of Byzantine saints, the torc was for many centuries reserved to Sergius and Bacchus so that it was not necessary to add an inscription in order to establish their identity. The earliest – and perhaps the best known – icon of them is the one which Bishop Uspensky stole from Sinai and took to Kiev where it has remained<sup>35</sup> (Fig. 135). The inscriptions giving their names were added later. It should be noted that each saint has three jewels hanging from his torc, which corresponds to the description of torcs given by Pseudo-Codinus. On the votive icon of Saint Sergius wearing a torc in the church of Saint Demetrius, Thessaloniki, also probably dating from the seventh century, the inscription with his name is contemporary with the mosaic<sup>36</sup> (Fig. 288).

Three jewels hang from their torc in other representations of them: on the ivory casket in the Bargello, Florence (Fig. 281), dated by Dalton to

<sup>35</sup> First seriously studied by D. Ainalov, "Sinai'skija ikoni voskovojo živopisi", *VV* 9, 1902, p. 325-361, dating the icon to the sixth century. J. Strzygowski, *Orient oder Rom*, Leipzig 1901, p. 125-126. The two best modern studies are by E. Kitzinger, "On some Icons of the Seventh Century", *The Art of Byzantium and the Medieval West*, edited by W.E. Kleinbauer, Bloomington/London 1976, p. 240, figure 9, and K. Weitzmann, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. The Icons I*, Princeton 1976, B 9, p. 28-30, figure 30. Neither author accepts a sixth-century dating.

<sup>36</sup> R. Hoddinott, *Early Byzantine Churches in Macedonia and Southern Serbia*, London 1963, p. 153-154, plate 52b; R. Cormack, "The Church of Saint Demetrius. The Water-Colours of W.S. George", *The Byzantine Eye*, Collected Studies, London 1989, II, n° 40.



the twelfth century<sup>37</sup>; on the mosaics at Daphni<sup>38</sup> (Figs. 136-137); in the XIIIth-century church at Koita in the Mani<sup>39</sup> (Fig. 289); in Saint Sophia, Trebizond<sup>40</sup> (Fig. 290). However, on icons painted under Western influence their torc was reduced to a simple circlet without jewels<sup>41</sup> (Fig. 138). Other such examples are the so called Crusader icons, of which an exhaustive study has recently been published<sup>42</sup>.

Other representations of warrior saints wearing the torc in Byzantine art are uncommon. On one XIIIth-century icon, also at Sinai, Saint Procopius is depicted wearing a diadem and a torc<sup>43</sup> (Figs. 139). In his typical scene, this outstanding warrior saint, was represented on horseback having a vision of the Cross<sup>44</sup>.

In Coptic iconography, the torc is represented as part of the costume of the person wearing it, without any precise significance. Three examples may be noted. One is in a manuscript in Manchester, Ryland's

Library, Coptic 33<sup>45</sup> (Fig. 286). Saint Menas is seated on horseback his arms outstretched; his torc is ornamented with three jewels. Another is in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, a miniature from a tenth-century manuscript which originated at Fayoum<sup>46</sup> (Fig. 287). He is identified as Saint Theodore Orientalis. If he was known at Byzantium, he was never represented there<sup>47</sup>. The inscription calls him Saint Apa Theodore the Anatolian. With his lance he pierces a prostrate chained figure, a serpent with a human head. Two angels offer him crowns or circlets, while his torc is ornamented with three jewels. Presumably the torc, in his case, is a reward for valour. The miniature may have as its model the painting of Saint Sissinius of Antioch in chapel XII at Bawit<sup>48</sup>. A final example is another miniature in a manuscript from Fayoum, now in the Pierpont Morgan Library.<sup>49</sup> This time it is a portrait of the archangel Michael (Fig. 285). He holds an orb in his left hand and a lance in his right. His torc is adorned with jewels.

In conclusion it is clear that sufficient literary and iconographical evidence exists to trace the development of the torc or *μανιάκιον* from Antiquity, when it was taken over from the Sassanians and Gauls as a reward for valour in battle. It was also used by the Persians as an ornament. Already known to the Romans, it was widely used by the Byzantines in civil and military circles, in spite of ecclesiastical disapproval. It acquired importance in hagiography and religious iconography, on account of its place in the *Passion* of Saints Sergius and Bacchus, for whom it was a personal attribute. Its importance in court ceremonial is known from the *De ceremoniis* of Constantine Porphyrogenitus and the *De officiis* of Pseudo-Codinus. Representations of guards or courtiers wearing the torc exist. It continued to figure on

<sup>37</sup> O.M. Dalton, "A Silver Treasure from the District of Kerynia, Cyprus, Now Preserved in the British Museum", *Archaeologia* 57, 1900. A. Goldschmidt and K. Weitzmann, *Elfenbeinskulpturen I, Kästen*, Berlin 1930, n° 99a-e, plates LXVIII, LIX, give the fullest description and also date the coffer to the XIIth century. However they did not grasp the significance of the torcs, calling them *Martyrerings*, which obviously they are not.

<sup>38</sup> E. Diez and O. Demus, *Byzantine Mosaics in Greece: Daphni and Hosios Loukas*, Cambridge Massachusetts 1931, figures 68, 69, G. Millet, in his earlier study, *Le monastère de Daphni*, Paris 1899, did not appreciate the significance of their torcs.

<sup>39</sup> M. Altripp, *Die Prothesis und ihre Bildausstattungen in Byzanz unter Berücksichtigung der Denkmäler Griechenlands*, Frankfurt am Main 1998, p. 250.

<sup>40</sup> D. Talbot Rice, *The Church of Hagia Sophia at Trebizond*, Edinburgh 1968, p. 142-143.

<sup>41</sup> G. and M. Sotirou, *Icones du Mont Sinai*, Athens 1956-1958, I, figure 185; II, p. 170-171.

<sup>42</sup> János Folda, *Crusader Art in the Holy Land*, Cambridge University Press 2005, p. 338-342. It is hardly necessary to add that the author makes no explicit reference to their torcs!

<sup>43</sup> Doula Mouriki, "Four Thirteenth-Century Sinai Icons by the Painter Peter", *Studenica et Art byzantin autour de l'année 1200*, edited by V. Korać, Belgrade 1988, p. 343-344, figure 5.

<sup>44</sup> Walter, *Warrior Saints*, p. 96-97.

<sup>45</sup> J. Leroy, *Les manuscrits coptes et coptes-arabes illustrés*, Paris 1974, figure 106 ii. He does not date the manuscript. Walter, *op. cit.*, p. 156, plate 56.

<sup>46</sup> *L'art copte*, Exhibition catalogue, Paris, n° 52; A. Galuzzi, "Teodoro l'orientale", *Bibliotheca sanctorum* 12, 249.

<sup>47</sup> Walter, *op. cit.* p. 60-61.

<sup>48</sup> J. Clédat, *Le monastère et la nécropole de Baouit*, Cairo 1940, p. 80, plates 55, 56.

<sup>49</sup> *L'art copte*, *op. cit.*, n° 51.

portraits particularly of Saints Sergius and Bacchus throughout the Byzantine epoch. Taken up by the Copts, its use was less formal. It does not seem to have been popular in Western art.

## IC XC NI KA: THE APOTROPAIC FUNCTION OF THE VICTORIOUS CROSS

It may come as a surprise to the passer-by in an Athenian subway when he observes, among the panoply of *graffiti*, the letters IC XC NI KA placed between the arms of a cross. It is less surprising to find the same device imprinted on the *prosfhora* used in the Greek liturgy. The primary problem here is to know how and when the practice began. The device is certainly ancient, and its basic meaning – Jesus Christ conquers – did not change. Nevertheless, it has been used with various connotations and in different contexts, related to the medium in which it appears. It is now fifty years since Anatole Frolow published what is still the best general study of the device<sup>1</sup>. Curiously, a number of scholars who have written on some aspect of it since Frolow's time were apparently unaware of the existence of his study. This ignorance may be in part responsible for the implausible nature of some of their proposals. Furthermore, there is now new material which was not available in Frolow's time. It seems, therefore, that an attempt at a new synthesis is justified. The uses to which the device was put will be grouped according to the medium in which it appears. A developed repertory of the acronyms which sometimes accompany the device is provided; however, it is not necessarily exhaustive.

### The origins of the device

The Cross, whether represented figuratively or merely as a sign, was perhaps the most pervasive subject in Byzantine art.<sup>2</sup> Like relics of it and

<sup>1</sup> A. Frolow, "IC XC NI KA", *Byzantinoslavica* 17, 1956, p. 98-113.

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed general account, *vid.* Erich and Erika Dinkler, "Kreuz I", *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst* 5, 1991, p. 1-219 (vorikonoklastisch); G. Galavaris, "Kreuz II", *ibidem*, p. 219-284 (nachikonoklastisch).

like the gesture of the sign of the cross, it was deemed to be apotropaically powerful. The earliest legend with which the Cross was combined was probably Constantine's celebrated formula:  $\tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omega\ \nu\iota\kappa\alpha$ <sup>1</sup>. This legend, the first, to be stamped in Greek characters on Byzantine coins, was used on the *folles* of Constans II from 641 to 658<sup>2</sup> and recurs even as late as the reign of Basil II on the *miliresion*<sup>3</sup>. It may be observed on a cross at the entrance to a ruined church at Akören, fifty-two kilometres north of Adana. The church may be dated by an inscription to 525<sup>4</sup> (Fig. 292). It may also be observed, with a cross, on the reverse of a Solomonic amulet<sup>5</sup>. No certain date can be given to this object, which, however, is unlikely to be later than the period of Iconoclasm. The earliest surviving representation of Constantine's vision, with the legend, is in *Paris graec.* 510, f. 440<sup>6</sup> (Fig. 47). The scene here is a narrative one, while the two crosses with the IC XC NI KA legend in the same manuscript, f. Bv and C, are rather to be interpreted as apotropaic<sup>7</sup> (Fig. 212). The device was certainly being used earlier than

<sup>1</sup> Eusebian, *Life of Constantine*, 128-32, edited by Averil Cameron and Stuart G. Hall, Oxford 1999, p. 82; commentary, 206-213 = PG 20, 944. Curiously, in his *Historia ecclesiastica*, Eusebius does not refer to the vision. Lactantius, *La mort des persécuteurs*, I, xli v13, edited by J. Moreau, Paris 1954, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> C. Morisson, *Catalogue des monnaies byzantines de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris 1970, p. 331.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 609.

<sup>4</sup> *Tabula imperii byzantini V, Kilikien und Isaurien*, edited by F. Hild and H. Belenkanper, Vienna 1980, I, p. 168-169; 2, figure 40.

<sup>5</sup> N. Thierry, "Mentalités et formulations iconoclastes en Anatolie", *Journal des savants*, avril-juin 1976, p. 101-104; *Eadem*, "Le culte de la Croix dans l'empire byzantin du VII<sup>e</sup> siècle au Xe siècle dans ses rapports avec la guerre contre l'infidèle. Nouveaux témoignages archéologiques", *Rivista di studi bizantini e slavi, Miscellanea Agostino Perini* I, 1980, p. 215, figure 7.

<sup>6</sup> H. Omont, *Fac-similés des miniatures de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris (second edition) 1929, plate ix, p. 31 (dated about 880). Constantine's vision was not often represented, but *vid.* the late example, (dated 1466) in the church of the Holy Cross, Platanistava, Cyprus, A. and J. Stylianou, *By This Conquer*, Nicosia 1971, p. 69, figure 2. In a segment of the sky, the legend EN TOYTΩ NIKA accompanies a cross made up of stars. Leslie Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning in Sixth-Century Byzantium*, Cambridge 1991, p. 163-164, figure 45.

<sup>7</sup> Omont, *ibidem*, plates XVII, XVIII, p. 12-13; Brubaker, *ibidem*, figures 3, 4, p. 152-157.

880 and was beginning to replace the Constantinian formula. Frolow wrote of a *simple changement de graphie*.<sup>10</sup> However, even if this explanation is plausible for its origin, the practice of abbreviating the name of Jesus Christ and of placing the letters between the arms of the cross was too common not to have been deliberately standardized. When the temple of Philae in Egypt was converted into a church during Justinian's reign, a cross was carved by the door of the nave on the south side and underneath it the legend:  $\omicron\ \sigma\tau\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma\ \epsilon\nu\iota\kappa\eta\sigma\epsilon\nu\ \alpha\epsilon\iota\ \nu\iota\kappa\alpha$ . This is obviously close to the device<sup>11</sup>. Another Justinianic monument is the cistern at Madaba, with the device represented at each angle, and a dedicatory inscription:  $\alpha\nu\alpha\kappa\alpha\iota\nu\iota\sigma\theta\eta\ \upsilon\pi\omicron\ \iota\upsilon\sigma\tau\iota\nu\iota\alpha\nu\omicron\upsilon\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\kappa\rho\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\nu\ \rho\omega\mu\alpha\iota\omicron\nu$ <sup>12</sup>. Frolow was sceptical, perhaps unduly so, as to the authenticity of the Justinianic crosses<sup>13</sup>. For him, the earliest authentic example of the device occurs in an inscription commemorating the restoration of the ramparts of Constantinople under Leo III and Constantine IV in 741/2<sup>14</sup>. Frolow did not know that the two emperors also introduced the device on their joint silver *miliresion*, minted after the coronation of Constantine as co-emperor on March 31st, 720<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Frolow, IC XC NI KA, p. 102.

<sup>11</sup> G. Lefebvre, *Recueil d'inscriptions grecques-chrétiennes d'Égypte*, Cairo 1907, p. 110, n° 590. H. Leclercq, "Philae", *DACL* 14, 1939, 700. P. Nautin, "La conversion du temple de Philae en église chrétienne", *CahArch* 17, 1967, p. 14, figure 8. E. Bernand, *de Philae II, Haut et Bas Empire*, Paris 1969, p. 256-259, n° 201, plate 49.

<sup>12</sup> H. Leclercq, "Madaba", *DACL* 10, 1931, 860. P. Gatier, *Inscriptions de la Jordanie, Région centrale*, Paris 1986, p. 126-127. M. Piccirillo, *Chiese e mosaici di Madaba*, Jerusalem 1989. Neither Gatier nor Piccirillo take up the question whether the device is later in date than the inscription.

<sup>13</sup> Frolow, IC XC NI KA, p. 109, note 66.

<sup>14</sup> H. Lietzmann, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel*, Berlin 1929, p. 31, n° 13, referring to A. Van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople, The Walls of The City and Adjoining Historical Sites*, London 1899, p. 98. In Van Millingen's time, the tower had already been destroyed, so that the inscription was only known from a photograph. Van Millingen also noted another example of the device, *op. cit.*, p. 101, accompanying another restoration of the walls after the earthquake of 995.

<sup>15</sup> Morisson, *Catalogue des monnaies Byzantines*, p. 450-451.



## The device on coinage

At the beginning of the VIIIth century, the Byzantine emperors had the legend *victoria Augusti* stamped on their coins<sup>16</sup>. This was the case for Philipppicus Bardanus (711-716), Anastasius II (713-715), Theodosius III (715-717), and, on his *solidi*, for Leo III (717-741)<sup>17</sup>. Leo's introduction of the cross and IC XC NI KA exclusively on the silver *miliareasion*, probably minted after his son's coronation for a *largesse*, was a precedent followed regularly by his successors on the same occasion: Constantine V (741-755) with Leo<sup>18</sup>, Artabasdu (742-743) with Nicephoros<sup>19</sup>, Leo IV (775-778) with Constantine<sup>20</sup>, and Constantine VI with Irene<sup>21</sup>. For Nicephoros I, the *miliareasion* is not known. However, he had the device stamped on the *solidus* and the *tremissis*<sup>22</sup>. The practice of stamping the device on the silver *miliareasion* was taken up again by Michael I (811-813) with Theophilus<sup>23</sup>, by Theophilus (829-842) with Constantine, his elder son who died young<sup>24</sup>. After Constantine's death, Theophilus continued to mint the *miliareasion* but with his name alone, a departure from earlier practice<sup>25</sup>.

Thus a century after its inception either the original practice of minting the silver *miliareasion* when a co-emperor was crowned was no longer considered to be relevant or its original purpose had been forgotten. Nevertheless the device continued to be stamped on coins for some time. Michael III (842-867) used it on his *miliareasion*, bearing his name alone or also those of his mother Theodora and his aunt Thecla<sup>26</sup>. Basil I (867-886) associated his elder son Constantine (died 879) with

him but not his younger son Leo<sup>27</sup>. Leo VI (886-912) figured alone or with his son Constantine<sup>28</sup>. Alexander I (912-913) figured alone<sup>29</sup>. For Constantine VII (913-959) five types of *miliareasion* with the device are known; Constantine figures alone or with a co-emperor<sup>30</sup>. There is no *miliareasion* for Romanus II (959-963)<sup>31</sup>. There are several types for Basil II (963-1025), which vary according to the co-emperor who was reigning at the time<sup>32</sup>. There also exists for Basil II, as noted earlier, a variant with the Constantinian formula.

The *miliareasion* disappeared after 1080, along with the gold *nomisma*. Moreover it was not replaced subsequently in Alexius I's coinage reform of 1092<sup>33</sup>. For the intermediate decades between Basil II's death and 1080, the *miliareasion* was minted but the device was replaced by an invocation of the *Theotokos*. Finally attention should be drawn to a puzzling anonymous coin attributed by Hendy to the early years of the reign of Alexius I (1081-1092)<sup>34</sup>. It has on its obverse a representation of Christ's bust with the device on the reverse side.

A survey, however tedious, of *all* the imperial coins minted with the device IC XC NI KA has the advantage of enabling some positive as well as negative affirmations to be made confidently. Firstly, while the use of the device in more restrictively religious contexts was not excluded, it was certainly exploited imperially, because coins were notoriously one of the principal instruments of imperial propaganda. However, it would be temerarious to attribute its introduction on the silver *miliareasion* to Iconoclast emperors. Constantine IV, like his father Leo III, espoused the Iconoclast cause. Moreover, as Cécile Morrisson has pointed out, the first silver *miliareasion* stamped with the device was

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 437-439.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 445-457.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 469.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 480.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 486.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 492.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 499-500.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 503.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 507.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 526. According to Ph. Grierson, *Byzantine Coinage*, Washington 1983, the *miliareasion* now became a regular part of the currency.

<sup>26</sup> Morrisson, *Catalogue des monnaies Byzantines*, p. 534-535.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 543.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 553.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 559.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 571-573.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 580.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 591, 595, 609.

<sup>33</sup> Grierson, *op. cit.*, p. 11; J.-C. Cheynet, "Quelques remarques sur le culte de la Croix en Asie Mineure au Xe siècle", *Histoire et culture chrétienne, Mélanges M. Marchasson*, Paris 1992, p. 72.

<sup>34</sup> M.F. Hendy, *Coinage and Money in the Byzantine Empire (1081-1261)*, Washington 1969; Morrisson, *Catalogue des monnaies Byzantines*, p. 605.

minted six years before Leo III's first decree against images<sup>35</sup>. Subsequently it appeared on the coins of Iconophile emperors (Artabasdu, Constantine VI and Irene). Convenient as it may have been to use an image of Christ which was at once orthodox and inoffensive to Iconoclasts, this does not offer an adequate explanation why Leo III introduced it on his *miliaresion*. It seems more plausible, since it was also used on the walls of Constantinople, to suppose that he – and his successors – were affirming their confidence in victory over the Arabs. In fact the first silver *miliaresion* may have been an imitation of the *dirhem* of Abd-al-Mali (695–698)<sup>36</sup>. As André Grabar observed long ago, neither Iconophiles nor Iconoclasts used coins for propaganda purposes against their antagonists<sup>37</sup>. Consequently, a specific connection between the device and Iconoclast teaching on images can be safely ruled out.

It may be that the coronation of Constantine IV as co-emperor was also a gesture of defiance to the Arabs, affirming that the dynasty was secure of its future. Later the connection between a coronation and the silver *miliaresion* stamped with the device would have been forgotten. Possibly the device also lost its connotations of imperial triumph and victory. The religious mentality of Byzantium underwent a change. Instead of affirming their certitude of victory, thanks to the protection of Christ and his Cross, the Byzantines resorted to a more modest prayer for help. This change coincided with the growth of the cult of the *Theotokos*. In order to seek her intercession, her image replaced the device on the last issues of the silver *miliaresion*.

### The device in the Byzantine liturgy

In contemporary Greek Byzantine liturgy, according to Brightman, the pieces of the *prosphora* destined to be consumed at communion are

<sup>35</sup> Morrison, *op. cit.*, p. 450.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>37</sup> A. Grabar, *L'iconoclisme byzantin, dossier archéologique*, Paris 1957, p. 119–129.

placed crosswise on the paten according to the formula IC XC NI KA<sup>38</sup>. The earliest reference which Frolow found to the use of the device in the liturgy was in the celebrated edition of Goar, dating from the XVIIIth century<sup>39</sup>. Goar would have been following an earlier Greek text, but this has not been identified. There is no reference to the device in medieval texts of the rite of the *prothesis*. References are indeed known to the celebrant making the sign of the cross with his lance over the *prosphora*, for example in the *Historia ecclesiastica*<sup>40</sup>. Theodore Studite also refers to the sign of the cross being made over the *prosphora*; he attributes the origin of the practice to Basil (not to John Chrysostom)<sup>41</sup>. Pseudo-Sophronius wrote of the crucifixion of Christ on Golgotha "as in the holy *prothesis*".<sup>42</sup>

Finally, there is the puzzling phrase of Symeon of Thessaloniki: ὁ σταυρὸς ἢ αὐτὸς ὁ Σωτὴρ ἐξεικονίζομενος<sup>43</sup>. Should one translate: The Cross or the Saviour himself (is) *typified* rather than *represented*? Either way there is no clear allusion to the letters IC XC NI KA. Frolow notes only one reference – and that a Western one – to an image of Christ on the host<sup>44</sup>. Honorius of Autun drew an analogy between the imperial

<sup>38</sup> F.E. Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, Oxford 1894, p. 393, καὶ τίθησιν αὐτὰς ἐν τῷ ἁγίῳ δίσκῳ σταυροειδὸς IC XC NI KA.

<sup>39</sup> Frolow, IC XC NI KA, p. 109, note 66; J. Goar, *Εὐχολογίων seu Rituale Graecorum*, Paris 1647, p. 117.

<sup>40</sup> F.E. Brightman, "The Historia Mystagogica and Other Greek Commentaries on the Byzantine Liturgy", *Journal of Theological Studies* 9, 1908, especially § 28, § 30, § 31b.

<sup>41</sup> Theodore Studite, *Adversus Iconomachos* I, PG 99, 489, Το δὲ σφραγίσ-  
ζεσθαι τὴν προσφώραν.

<sup>42</sup> Pseudo-Sophronius, *Commentarius liturgicus* § 8, PG 87, 3988–3989.

<sup>43</sup> Symeon of Thessaloniki, *De sacra liturgia* § 88, PG 155, 265–268. *Vid.* P. De Meester, "Les origines et le développement du texte grec de la liturgie de S. Jean Chrysostome", *Χριστοστομικά*, Rome 1908, p. 305; *Idem*, *Genèse, sources et développement du texte grec de la liturgie de S. Jean Chrysostome et Basileus pendant des Mittelalters*, Beiträge zur Kenntnis der byzantinischen Liturgie, Berlin 1908, p. 87–149; "Il commentario liturgico de S. Germano patriarcha Constantinopolitana e la versione latina di Anastasio bibliotecario", edited by N. Borgia, *Studi liturgici* 1 (Roma e oriente 1), Grottaferrata 1912, p. 19–20.

<sup>44</sup> Frolow, IC XC NI KA, p. 109, note 95.

*denarius*, on which the emperor's name and image were inscribed, and the host: *Ita imago Domini cum litteris in hoc pane exprimitur, quia in denario imago et nomen scribitur, et per hunc panem imago Dei reparatur*<sup>45</sup>. In each of the three cases the verb changes: *scribitur* for the emperor on the coin, *exprimitur* for Christ on the host and *reparatur* for the image of God in us. There is an element of ambiguity, for *exprimitur* can be translated as "expressed", or, like *scribitur*, as "inscribed".

Thus the evidence for the use of the device in the liturgy is somewhat tenuous. Nevertheless it is against this background that Byzantine bread stamps should be examined. Since Frolow (to whose study neither alludes) two scholars have written on this subject. George Galavaris prudently observed, with regard to the hypothesis that the *prospora* were stamped with the device from an early date, that "of the number of bread particles and whether the bread was stamped with special symbols, we know nothing that can be proved"<sup>46</sup>. James Breckenridge committed himself to some imprudent hypotheses<sup>47</sup>.

The practice of distributing stamped bread, known as *hygieia*, at pagan shrines was identified by Perdrizet, and subsequently by Dölger, as the precursor of the later Christian practice of distributing *eulogia*.<sup>48</sup> Here we are on fairly certain ground. A stamp in the British Museum, first published by O.M. Dalton was found in Cyprus. It is marked with our device<sup>49</sup> (Fig. 293). Galavaris considered that it was not later in date than the VIIIth century and that it was intended to be used for stamping the

<sup>47</sup> Honorius Augustodunensis, *Opera* III, *Liturgica*, *Gemma animae* 1, 35, PL 172, 555.

<sup>48</sup> G. Galavaris, *Bread and the Liturgy. The Symbolism of Early Christian and Byzantine Bread Stamps*, Madison, Wisconsin 1970, p. 70.

<sup>49</sup> J.D. Breckenridge, "The Iconoclasts' Image of Christ", *Gesta* 11 ii, 1972, p. 3-8.

<sup>50</sup> P. Perdrizet, "ΥΓΙΑ ΖΩΗ ΧΑΡΑ", *Revue des études géographiques* 27, 114, p. 266-267, citing a pre-Christian text about pilgrims obtaining *hygieia* at a pagan shrine. J.-D. Dölger, "Unser tägliches Brot", *Antike und Christentum: Kultur und religionsgeschichtliche Studien* 5, 1936, p. 201-210, plates 13-16. In his example of a *refrigerium* (?), the breads are marked with a cross. *Vid.* also Gary Vikan, "Art, Medicine and Magic in Early Byzantium", *DOP* 38, 1984, p. 69, figure 4.

<sup>51</sup> O.M. Dalton, *Catalogue of the Early Christian Antiquities and the Objects from the Christian East in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities and Ethnography of the British Museum*, London 1901, p. 172, n° 973.

liturgical *prospora*.<sup>50</sup> Regrettably, the object cannot be dated with any certitude. Moreover the use to which it was intended is not any more certain. Was it intended to be used for stamping bread? If so, was this bread intended to be used as *eulogia* or as liturgical *prospora*? These questions can only be left open, because the earliest secure evidence for the practice of stamping the *prospora* is not provided earlier than the dated stamp (1265-1266) at Mount Sinai<sup>51</sup>. That it was intended for liturgical use is made probable by the fact the words of consecration are inscribed round the edge. However, the acronym which was actually stamped was not IC XC NI KA but IC XC MH ΘY.

Breckenridge's approach to the subject was anything but hesitant. He readily accepted the stamp in the British Museum as being intended for the liturgical *prospora* and pre-Iconoclast in date<sup>52</sup>. For him "there can be little question that, by the time the Iconoclastic controversy began, the employment of this design (sc. our device) as the most correct one for marking the host was universal in the Eastern Church"<sup>53</sup>. Furthermore, "the special form of the Eucharistic bread stamp with its formula IC XC NI KA" was being "established by the liturgy of St. John Chrysostom whose fully established program was introduced throughout the Eastern Church during the VIth century"<sup>54</sup>. If Breckenridge could support these two statements, he must have been able to exploit source material which has remained inaccessible to other scholars. His ingenious conjectures do not end here. He goes on to enlist the silver *miliareasion* of Leo III and Constantine IV in his argumentation. He sees in it a "sharply stated assertion of Iconoclast doctrine"<sup>55</sup>. In consequence, it would have been minted considerably later than Constantine V's elevation to the status of co-emperor, a date when there is no evidence of manifest Iconoclast activity within the imperial government.

Thus Breckenridge arbitrarily interprets the *miliareasion* of Leo III and Constantine V as an Iconoclast manifesto and arbitrarily dates it to the

<sup>50</sup> Galavaris, *art. cit.* p. 74-75, figure 38.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 87-89, figure 42.

<sup>52</sup> J.D. Breckenridge, *art. cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 6.



period after Leo III's first promulgation of a decree against the cult of images. Now that M.F. Aurépy has shown that there are serious grounds for calling in doubt the authenticity of the account of Leo III's replacement over the Halki Gate of Christ's icon by a cross,<sup>56</sup> Breckenridge's exploitation of this account in favour of the cult of the Cross as central to Iconoclast piety only weakens his argument further.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, historians of Byzantine art tend now to interpret differently the way in which Iconoclasts decorated churches; rather than substituting crosses for figurative subjects, they merely eliminated the latter.<sup>58</sup>

Sadly, one is obliged to dismantle Breckenridge's elaborate assembly of hypotheses. On the one hand, as has already been shown, the use of the device IC XC NI KA on coins was not restricted to Iconoclast emperors; consequently it cannot be interpreted as an Iconoclast manifesto. On the other hand, there is no convincing evidence that the device had acquired liturgical connotations at this early date.

### The device in Byzantine manuscripts

Fifteen examples may be listed.

1. The two earliest, Paris *graec.* 510, f. Bv and f. C dating from about 880, have already been noted<sup>59</sup> (Fig. 212). The miniatures in which they occur were executed with considerable sophistication. Their refined and confident nature might suggest that they follow an established tradition, were it not that all the illustrations in this manuscript are exceptionally sophisticated.

2. Closely resembling the two preceding miniatures are those in the Leo Bible, Vatican *reg. graec.* 1, f. 2 and f. 3v, generally considered to

date from the Xth century<sup>60</sup>. They too are placed at the beginning of the manuscript and sophistically executed.

Frolow noted five other dated examples of manuscripts containing the device published by Kirsopp Lake, who, regrettably, did not specify the number of the folio on which the device was executed<sup>61</sup>.

3. The earliest, Lavra cod. 19, dated 984, is a *Tetraevangelion*<sup>62</sup>. It is placed at the end of the manuscript. The cross is not drawn but constituted by the arrangement of the text in a cruciform pattern, the letters of the device being placed in the angles. This manuscript is the earliest example of the practice. Four other Greek letters are added: Φ Χ Φ Υ. The meaning of this acronym will be given later.

4. Paris *graec.* 375, dated 1021, is a collection of Gospels and Epistles<sup>63</sup>. The device is small in size and placed in the top right hand corner of a folio next to the title of the text. It is ornamental, resembling an illuminated initial letter made up of twisted strands. Two dragons hold the foot of the cross in their jaws.

5. Florence, *Laur. plut.* 11 9, f. 282, also dated 1021, is a collection of John Chrysostom's Homilies<sup>64</sup>. Immediately after the title and a note by the copyist including the date of the manuscript, there is a cross. In the corners above the bar is the acronym IC XC ΦΩC XY and below it NI KA ΦΑΙΝΕΙ ΠΑCΙΝ. Other legends abound on the cross itself and below it. In the margin two small crosses are made up of letters. There is another ornamental cross and a bird.

6. Jerusalem *Panagia* cod. 1, f. 2, dated 1061, is a Lectionary<sup>65</sup>. The cross is highly ornamented. Nine circles (one is lost) were placed around it; they all contained legends. The four largest, placed in the angles of the cross, contain the letters IC XC NI KA.

<sup>59</sup> C. Stornajolo, *Miniature della Bibbia cod. Regin. Gr. 1*, plates 3, 6. A new edition has been prepared by P. Canart, S. Dufrenne and C. Mango. Frolow, IC XC NI KA.

<sup>60</sup> Frolow, *ibidem*.

<sup>61</sup> Kirsopp and Silva Lake, *Dated Greek Minuscule Manuscripts to the Year 1200 III*, Boston 1934, p. 107, plate 163.

<sup>62</sup> Lake, IV, 1935, p. 12, plate 256.

<sup>63</sup> Lake, X, 1939, p. 10, plate 693; Karin Krause, *Die illustrierten Homilien des Johannes Chrysostomos in Byzanz*, Wiesbaden 2004, p. 120, figure 169.

<sup>64</sup> Lake, V, 1936, p. 21, plate 371.

<sup>56</sup> M.F. Aurépy, 'La destruction de l'icône de Christ de la Chalce de Léon III: Propagande ou réalité?', *Byzantion* 60, 1990, p. 445-492.

<sup>57</sup> Breckenridge, *art. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>58</sup> Thierry, 'Le culte de la Croix', *art. cit. sup.*, note 7.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid. sup.*, note 9.

7. Sinait. 341, f. 2v, the Liturgical Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus, dates from the end of the XIth century<sup>66</sup>. Here the device serves as a frontispiece.

8. London Additional 36 654, a *Menologion*, dated 1103 (?), has on its last folio the text set out in the form of a cross with the letters of the device placed in its angles.

9. Athens 167, f. 220 and f. 220v, a Lectionary dating from the XIIth century contains two richly ornamented crosses with the letters of the device<sup>67</sup>. They are placed neither at the beginning nor at the end of the text.

10. Sinait. 221, f. 40, a Lectionary dated 1175, has the device above the headpiece for the third Monday of Pentecost<sup>68</sup>.

11. Athens 152, f. 144, the Gospels dating from the XIIIth century, has a band-shaped headpiece surmounted by the device<sup>69</sup>.

12. Athens 2509, f. 10, the Gospels, dating from the XIVth century, has the device placed at the beginning of the text<sup>70</sup>.

13. Athens 175, p. 3 and p. 152, a Lectionary, dates from the XIVth century<sup>71</sup>. The device is placed at the beginning of the Gospels of John and Mark, but in both cases the I and A are missing.

14. Athens 108, f. 1v, the Gospels dating from the XIVth century, has a full-page cross which serves as a frontispiece<sup>72</sup> (Fig. 297). The A is missing from the device.

15. Sinait. 339, the Liturgical Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus dating from about 1136-1155, differs slightly from the preceding

<sup>66</sup> K. Weitzmann and G. Galavaris, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai, The Liturgical Manuscripts I, From the Ninth to the Twelfth Century*, Princeton 1990, p. 108-109, figure 336.

<sup>67</sup> A. Marava-Chatziniolaou and Ch. Toufexi-Paschou, *Catalogue of the Illuminated Greek Manuscripts of the National Library of Greece I*, Athens 1978, p. 221, figure 616.

<sup>68</sup> Weitzmann and Galavaris, p. 167, figure 662.

<sup>69</sup> Chatziniolaou and Paschou, *op. cit.*, *Catalogue II*, Athens 1985, p. 40-41, figure 55.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 148, figure 321.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 226, figure 434.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 131, figure 295.

manuscripts<sup>73</sup>. On four folios the text is set out in a cruciform pattern, with letters placed in the angles of the cross. On f. 90, they are the usual letters of the device, but on f. 73 and f. 197 they are Φ Χ Φ Π while on f. 96v they are Ε Ε Ε Ε.

Although this list is unlikely to be exhaustive, there are sufficient examples to show that the device was normally placed either at the beginning or at the end of the principal text. However, there was no rigorous obligation to place it there. In fact in some manuscripts, (4) Paris *graec.* 375, (9) Athens 167, (10) Sinait. 221 and (11) Athens 152 the device was placed elsewhere. Moreover there are far more illuminated manuscripts in which the device does not figure anywhere. The letters IC XC sometimes figure without the NI KA, for example in three manuscripts in which the device appears at the beginning of the text, Sinait. 500, f. 4v, a Metaphrastic volume dating from about 1063;<sup>74</sup> Sinait. 172, f. 1, the Gospels<sup>75</sup>, dated 1067; Athens 70, f. 3, a Lectionary<sup>76</sup>, dating from the end of the XIIIth century. Quite different formulae are sometimes added, normally an acronym with only the initial letter of each word, although sometimes they may be written out in full, as Vatican *graec.* 463, f. 21v<sup>77</sup>, the Liturgical Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus, Α Π Μ C; Athens 133, f. 1<sup>78</sup>, Lectionary and Epistles, Φ [Χ] Φ Π; Athens 152, f. 11, the Gospels<sup>79</sup>, Ο Χρ(ιστός) αὐτο(ς) ἐστιν ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος; Messina Salvatore 73, f. 1<sup>80</sup>, a Lectionary dated 1172, IC XC YC ΘY.

<sup>73</sup> Weitzmann and Galavaris, *op. cit.*, note 66, p. 140-153, figure 583-586.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 74, fig. 199. Note that the miniature published by G. Galavaris, Ζωγραφικὴ βυζαντινῶν χειρογράφων, Athens 1995, p. 231, figure 87, with the device is incorrectly called Sinait. 500. Unfortunately, I have not been able to establish its proper identity, perhaps Sinait. 2123.

<sup>75</sup> Weitzmann and Galavaris, *op. cit.*, note 66, p. 80-81, figure 55.

<sup>76</sup> Chatziniolaou and Paschou II, *op. cit.*, note 67, p. 33, figure 28.

<sup>77</sup> G. Galavaris, *The Illustrations of the Liturgical Homilies of Gregory Nazianzenus*, Princeton 1969, p. 251, figure 69.

<sup>78</sup> Chatziniolaou and Paschou II, *op. cit.*, note 67, p. 33, figure 28.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 40-41, figure 55.

<sup>80</sup> I. Spatharakis, *Corpus of Dated Greek Manuscripts to the Year 1453*, Leiden 1981, n° 159, figure 304.

### Minor objects marked with the device

The device figures only on a small number of minor objects. I have found it only on one icon, on the reverse of a representation of Saints Zosimos and Nicolas at Mount Sinai, which Weitzmann dated to the first half of the Xth century<sup>81</sup>. Two earlier icons at Mount Sinai, which Weitzmann dated to the VIth or VIIth century, have the letters IC XC YC ΘY placed around the cross<sup>82</sup>. The Sotirious recorded a calendar icon, which they dated to the second half of the XIth century, upon which the following letters are inscribed: Z Z C K; A I I M C; E E E E; X X X X<sup>83</sup>. There remain the two icons possibly dating from the time when the chapel of Saint Neophytos, Cyprus, was decorated in 1183. Various letters, which do not include our device, are inscribed on them. They are best considered in the context of the chapel itself, which is particularly rich in inscriptions.

A single lead seal, which has been attributed to the VIIth or VIIIth century, has on one side an inscription invoking the Theotokos in favour of John the Apophatos; our device is inscribed on the other side<sup>84</sup>.

The Harbaville ivory triptych, dating from the Xth century, is no doubt the most outstanding example of one inscribed with our device<sup>85</sup> (Fig. 140). Unusually, the letters IC XC NI KA are all placed to left and right above the central arm of the cross. Other less impressive ivories are also inscribed with the device, for example the Borradaile triptych in the

<sup>81</sup> K. Weitzmann, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai, The Icons I. From the Sixth to the Tenth Century*, Princeton 1976, B 52, p. 83-85, pl. 208b. To this may be added the metal plaque on the reverse of an icon of the Virgin and Child in the Hermitage. The device would probably have been executed in the XIIIth century. A. Banck, *Byzantine Art in the Collections of the Soviet Museums*, Leningrad / New York 1978, n° 248.

<sup>82</sup> Weitzmann, *ibidem*, B 22, 23, p. 48, pl. 70.

<sup>83</sup> G. and M. Sotirios, *Icones du Mont Sinai*, Athens 1956-1958; I, plates 136-143, II, p. 123.

<sup>84</sup> *Iskusstvo vizantijsk v sobraniyah SSSR*, Moscow 1977, I, n° 258.

<sup>85</sup> *Byzance. L'art byzantin dans les collections publiques françaises*, Exhibition catalogue edited by J. Durand, Paris 1992, n° 149, p. 233-236, with bibliography.

British Museum, also dating from the Xth century, on which it occurs twice on the closed outer panels<sup>86</sup>.

The steatite of Saint John the Baptist in the Armoury of the Kremlin Moscow, dated to the XIVth or XVth century, is unique<sup>87</sup>. On the reverse, possibly added later, the device is placed above a coat of arms.

Considering the great number of reliquaries which are known, remarkably few carry our device. Frolow noted only three. One, which is now lost, dated from the XIIIth or XIVth century<sup>88</sup>. Another in the Treasury of San Marco has the Crucifixion represented on the face and our device on the reverse<sup>89</sup>. The third reliquary in the Accademia, Venice, probably dating from 1446-1459<sup>90</sup>, has on the reverse, besides our device, the acronym Φ X Φ Π. The small amount of evidence which we have suggests that the acronym IC XC NI KA on minor objects has no special connotation. It was merely an adjunct to the cross.

### Sepulchral monuments

The cross figured regularly in funerary art from the earliest times. However its accompaniment by our device was restricted. It does not seem to have been used in Syria, a territory so rich in Christian inscriptions. The nearest equivalents are on a tomb dated 410 at Deir Sanbil, upon which the letters A and Ω are accompanied by the words TOYTO NIKA<sup>91</sup>. On another tomb, undated, are the words τὸ σῶμα

<sup>86</sup> *Byzantium. Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture*, Exhibition catalogue edited by D. Buckton, London 1994, n° 153, p. 142-143.

<sup>87</sup> *Byzance*, op. cit., note 84, III, n° 1015.

<sup>88</sup> A. Frolow, *La relique de la Vraie Croix*, Paris 1961, p. 443 (n° 574).

<sup>89</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 485-486 (n° 663); Idem, *Les reliquaires de la Vraie Croix*, Paris 1965, figure 48. *The Treasury of San Marco, Venice*, Exhibition catalogue edited by D. Buckton, Milan 1984, n° 13, p. 148-151, with reproduction, p. 150, text by M.E. Frazer, who dates it about 1000.

<sup>90</sup> Frolow, *La relique*, p. 526-527 (n° 872).

<sup>91</sup> L. Jalabert and R. Mouterde, *Inscriptions grecques et latines de Syrie IV. Laodicée, Apamée*, Paris 1955, p. 130, n° 1437; M. de Vogüé, *Syrie centrale*.



τοῦτο νικᾷ.<sup>92</sup> Another tomb, undated, probably from Herment, Egypt, is marked with a cross. Above the bar IHCOYC XPICTOC is written out in full, with NI KA below it. An accompanying inscription calls on the Lord to redeem the soul of Theodoros. In this case the device can be interpreted as a prayer for salvation.<sup>93</sup>

From the XIth century, examples of the device become more numerous on tombs. These have only been systematically recorded for the territory of modern Greece.<sup>94</sup> An XIth-century pseudo-sarcophagus at the Great Lavra is decorated with three crosses, all double-barred.<sup>95</sup> The cross to the right is inscribed above and below the upper bar with the acronym IC XC NI KA, that in the middle with X X X X, while the right hand cross has no inscription. Other examples are at the Panagia, Episkopi, Ano Volos (1274/6)<sup>96</sup>, the Moni Petras, Portana Piliou of the same date<sup>97</sup>, again at Ano Volos (after 1276), with the lower part of the cross destroyed<sup>98</sup>, and, at the same place, with the cross complete (also after 1276)<sup>99</sup>.

As on minor objects, our device does not have any clearly specific connotation, the letters being again a simple adjunct to the cross.

## Churches

### 1. Early churches.

The earliest dateable example of a cross, accompanied by a legend close to our device, is in the converted temple of Philae.<sup>100</sup> Theodosius II promulgated an edict ordering that pagan temples should be destroyed and marked with a cross<sup>101</sup>. This edict, as is well known, was far from universally observed. Deichmann recorded eighty-nine cases of pagan temples being converted into churches<sup>102</sup>. Some, like the temple at Philae, continued to be used for pagan cult for at least another century, which, as has been noted earlier, was converted under Justinian, between 535 and 537 into a church. There is an undated, but probably primitive, acronym in a church at Telanissos, Syria. It runs XC NI ... but is not accompanied by a cross<sup>103</sup>. Finally, an undated example of our device was discovered under a IXth-century painting in the catacomb of Saint Januarius, Naples<sup>104</sup>.

### 2. Churches in Cappadocia.

In spite of the importance of crosses in the decoration of churches in Cappadocia<sup>105</sup>, only four examples of our device have been recorded. In each case, it is associated with an apse, a fact which will be commented later. They all date from the IXth or Xth century; the region in which they are found was, so Cheynet has suggested, under the domination of the Phocas family<sup>106</sup>. In Açıkel Ağa kilisesi, the cross is placed on the wall

*Architecture civile et religieuse du Ier au VIIe siècle*, Paris 1865, I, p. 7; II, p. 108-109, 154.

<sup>92</sup> Jalabert and Moutende IV, p. 117, n° 1404.

<sup>93</sup> G. Lefebvre, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques-chrétiennes d'Égypte*, Cairo 1907, p. 94, n° 513.

<sup>94</sup> Th. Pazaras, *Ανάγινωστος ανακρίσεων και επιτάφιας πλάκας της μέσης ύστερης Βυζαντινής περιόδου στην Ελλάδα*, Athens 1988, especially p. 114 *et seq.*: σταυρός.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 28, n° 17, plate 13b.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 38-39, n° 45a, plate 30b, 32a.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 39, n° 45b, plate 32b.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 40, n° 46a, plate 35a.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 65, n° 88, pl. 35c.

<sup>100</sup> *Vid. sup.*, note 11.

<sup>101</sup> A. Frantz, "From Paganism to Christianity in Athens", *DOP* 19, 1965, p. 187; *Codex Theodosianus* (435), XVI 10 26.

<sup>102</sup> J. Deichmann, "Christianerung", *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* II, 1954, 1230-1234; Erich and Erika Dinkler, "Kreuz I", *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst* 5, 1991, p. 1-219.

<sup>103</sup> Jalabert and Moutende, *op. cit. sup.*, note 91, II, p. 232, n° 414.

<sup>104</sup> H. Leclercq, "Cujus nomen Deus scit", *DACL* 3, 3185.

<sup>105</sup> Thierry, "Le culte de la Croix", *art. cit. sup.*, note 7.

<sup>106</sup> Cheynet, *art. cit. sup.*, note 33.

above the altar; only the letters NI KA have survived<sup>107</sup>. In Kenglik kilise, (Pantanassa) Akköy<sup>108</sup>, the device is placed in a niche in the centre of the apse with a cross carrying the same letters to left and right. In Zelve, church n° 4, the device figures on the north pier of the arch before the apse of the south-east chapel<sup>109</sup> (Fig. 296). In the main church on the left, triumphal arch the cross is placed between two fishes, with, to the left, the letters HC XC, while, to the right, only the letter X is legible<sup>110</sup> (Figs. 294-295). In Haçlı kilise, Kızıl Çukur, the cross is placed in a niche in the centre of the apse. Of the accompanying acronym only the letters IC XC ...A have survived<sup>111</sup>.

It should be mentioned in passing that our legend, along with other inscriptions, was written on the wall of the hermitage of the monk Symeon at Zelve. However there was no accompanying cross<sup>112</sup>.

### 3. Later churches, except those in Serbia.

The church of the monastery of Saint Lawrence, Pilion, has two crosses on its façade<sup>113</sup>. The one placed above the door has the letters IC XC carved on the bar. The other, a double-barred cross, has our device inscribed above and below the bar.

<sup>107</sup> C. Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines de Cappadoce. Le programme iconographique de l'abside et de ses abords*, Paris 1991, p. 327.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 148.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 7, plate 18, figure 1; N. Thierry, *Haut Moyen Age en Cappadoce. Les églises de la région de Çavuşin II*, Paris 1994, p. 356.

<sup>110</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *ibidem*, p. 6, plate 17, figure 1; Thierry, *ibidem*, p. 352, figure 8, plate 185a. Jolivet-Lévy, surprisingly, describes our device as "la célèbre acclamation de victoire introduite au Moyen Age dans la liturgie".

<sup>111</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *ibidem*, p. 51; Thierry, *ibidem*, p. 248.

<sup>112</sup> G. de Jerphanion, *Les églises rupestres de Cappadoce* 12, Paris 1932, p. 594, inscription n° 108.

<sup>113</sup> R. Leonidopoulou-Stylianiou, "Παρατήρησης στο μοναστήρι του Αγίου Αμπασίου Πιλίου", *DChAH*, Series IV, Vol. 9, 1977-1979, pl. 97a. The cross above the door with a legend referring to the founder (Ignatios) is accompanied by the date 1551, p. 234, figure 96a; the cross to the left of the door possibly dates from the XIIIth century, p. 243, figure 97b.

The decoration of the apse of the hermitage of Saint Neophytos, Cyprus, can be dated around 1200<sup>114</sup>. Even if the two icons on the templon are slightly later, the acronyms on their reverse are in harmony with the decorative programme of the apse. Our device is only part but – normally the central part – of a developed programme of apotropaic acronyms, of which that in Saint Neophytos is the earliest example. It is likely that the eccentric hermit Neophytos, who lived here, chose the programme. The legend of our device figures six times in the sanctuary. It is inscribed four times on the wooden cross above the altar on the front and back of each arm, abbreviated to IC XC NHK. It is also inscribed in the niche to the right of the central alcove and in the alcove in the south-west corner of the bema. In three instances, our legend is accompanied by other acronyms: in the south-west alcove, left T T N T, centre Φ X Φ Π, right IC XC [Φ X] Φ Π; on the reverse of the icon of Christ Philanthropos IC XC YC ΘY and X X X X; on the reverse of the icon of the Virgin Eleousa, IC XC and M Γ X B. It is worthy of notice that on the two icons the older form of the acronym IC XC YC ΘY replaces our legend. Also, with one exception, T T N T in the south-west alcove, all the acronyms would have been easily deciphered by the literate and the initiated.

Other acronyms will be noted later which are not so easily deciphered, as well as a few in which the artist probably made an error. Yet others occur to which several interpretations may be given. It is unlikely that they were deliberately arcane. More probably they belong to a fashion or a genre, which may be compared with the contemporary craze for reducing the words of a title to their initial letters so forming an acronym (*sigle*).

Three XIVth-century churches at Thessaloniki, Kastoria and the Meteora should now be mentioned. Saint Nicolas Orphanos, Thessaloniki, dating from 1310-1320, contains four acronyms<sup>115</sup>. Around the upper bar of the

<sup>114</sup> C. Mango and E.J.W. Hawkins, "The Hermitage of St. Neophytos", *DOP* 20, 1966, p. 162-163.

<sup>115</sup> A. Xyngopoulos, *Οι τοιχογραφίες του αγίου Νικολάου Ορφανού Θεσσαλονίκης*, Athens, 1964. *Idem*, "Νεότερα έρευνα εις τον Άγιον Νικόλαον Θεσσαλονίκης", *Μακεδονικά* 6, 1964-1965, p. 93. Largely superseded by A. Tsitouridou, *Ο*

cross in the apse the legend of our device is inscribed. Below the central bars are the letters E Φ Θ T, and to the right of it CT(αυ)POC I(ησο)Y X(ριστο)Y YIOY TOY ΘEOY<sup>116</sup>. Three other examples are to be found in the narthex: that on the east side of the window in the south wall is virtually identical with the preceding example<sup>117</sup>; that on the west side of the same window has the legend of our device above the upper arm of the cross and, below the central arm, Π(α)ς ΧΡΙΣΤΙΑΝΟ(ς) ΠΡΟΣΚΥΝ(ε)ι CT(αυ)PON X(ριστο)Y T(ον) THMION<sup>118</sup>. The cross at the south window of the west wall is accompanied by the letters Φ X Φ Π<sup>119</sup>. These legends are easily read. Moreover, the fact that two are written out fully instead of being reduced to acronyms makes it clear that they were not intended to be arcane.

The two examples in the church of the Taxiarches, Kastoria, probably belong to the series of paintings executed in 1359/60<sup>120</sup> (Fig. 291). They are placed on the walls either side of the entrance from the narthex to the nave. The crosses are three-barred. The legends which accompany the north cross are easily read. Around the uppermost bar is our legend abbreviated: IC XC N K. To the left and right of this bar are the letters E E E. Below the central bar are three series of initial letters: Φ T X X; Φ Δ Φ Π; P P P P. The third series is not problematical; the second and third Orlandos emended to Φ X Φ Π and T T Δ Φ. The legends accompanying the south cross, which were not published by Orlandos, are less well preserved. They are not greatly different from those accompanying the north cross: IC XC N K, Φ K B (?) K and P P P P. It becomes clear that an entrance way, whether to the body of the church or the sanctuary, was a strategic position for placing an apotropaic sign.

The church of the Presentation at the Meteora, built according to an inscription over the door in 1366/7, with the hieromonk Nilos as principal

ζωγραφικός διάκοσμος του Αγίου Νικολάου Ορφανού στη Θεσσαλονίκη (Βυζαντινά Μνημεία, 6), Thessaloniki, 1986.

<sup>116</sup> Tsougaridou, p. 217, plate 108.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 217-218, plate 117.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 217-218, plate 118.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 218, plate 119.

<sup>120</sup> A.K. Orlandos, "Τα Βυζαντινά μνημεία της Καστοριάς", *Αρχειόν των Βυζαντινών μνημείων της Ελλάδος* 4, 1939, p. 69-70; Pelekanidis and Chatzidakis, *Kastoria*, p. 102.

donor, contains several of these acronyms<sup>121</sup>. In a niche on the south wall around the upper arm of the cross may be read the letters XC NK. The cross on the east wall of the south entrance is accompanied by the following acronyms: IC XC N K, Φ X Φ Π, X X X X and E E E E. On the west wall the cross is accompanied by the acronym T T Δ Φ and another which has not been deciphered CT CT Δ Π(?). On the east side of the north wall are four acronyms: Φ X Φ Π, A B Δ E, T X Δ P and P P P P. The second and third of them remain obscure. Subotić considered these crosses to be associated with Christ's sacrifice, but in the XIVth century there is no clear evidence for this.

A church in Cyprus, dated 1494 and in consequence much later than the hermitage of Neophytos with which it has no evident connection, that of the Holy Cross at Platanistasa has at least one cross<sup>122</sup>. It is three-barred and has its acronyms disposed in an unusual way. Above the cross they are inscribed in three lines: IC XC; Y Θ; C K C TT. Above the uppermost bar of the cross are the letters N K. Between the uppermost and the central arms is the legend A K X T (to be emended to A X X Π ?), and below the central arm T T Δ Φ.

The parecclesion of Saint John the Almoner at the church of the Phaneromini, Trikkala, undated but probably earlier than the XVth century, has a three-barred cross on the left door of the templon leading to the prothesis<sup>123</sup>. Our device is inscribed around the central arm. Below this, descending to the footrest, are six acronyms: Φ K Φ Π, T K T Γ (alluding to Adam's skull represented below the cross), Θ Θ Θ Θ, E E E E, A Π M C T, T T Δ Φ. The disposition and number of legends recall the device which would be represented on the monastic *schema*<sup>124</sup>.

<sup>121</sup> G. Subotić, "Počeci monaškog života i crkva manastira Sretenja u Meteorima", *Zbornik za likovne umetnosti* 2, 1966, p. 172.

<sup>122</sup> A. and J. A. Stylianou, *The Painted Churches of Cyprus*, London 1985, p. 210, plate 120.

<sup>123</sup> N. Giannopoulos, "Αι παλαιά εκκλησία Τρικκάλων (Θεσσαλίας)", *BZ* 27, 1927, p. 360.

<sup>124</sup> Th. Provatakis, *Ο διάβολος εις την Βυζαντινήν τέχνην*, Thessaloniki 1980, figure 270.



A final example of the device in modern Greece is an undated plaque from Arkadia, Crete. Four acronyms as well as IC XC NI KA are inscribed on it: Φ Χ Φ Π; Ε Ε Ε Ε; Α Π Μ C; Χ Χ Χ Χ<sup>125</sup>.

In Bulgaria there is a curious slab built into the wall of the church at Kardžali, on which, together with other apotropaic signs, our device is represented three times, never without mistakes.<sup>126</sup>

#### 4. Serbian churches.

A full list here of the Serbian churches containing our device would be supererogatory, because Gordana Babić has already published them comprehensively, together with a study in depth of the other acronyms which sometimes accompany it<sup>127</sup>. Since the reader can consult this study, it will be sufficient to summarize Babić's work and add some illustrations.

Babić has listed eleven Serbian churches of which the earliest is at Arilje (1296) and the latest at Markov manastir, Sušica (1380-1382). All of them contain our device; the other acronyms vary. They are normally placed strategically near a door or window or in a passage, most often in or near the sanctuary, to ward off forces of evil. Thus they follow the tradition of the examples noted previously, particularly Saint Neophytos, Cyprus, the Taxiarches, Kastoria, and Saint Nicolas Orphanos, Thessaloniki.

Some generalisations may be made. Firstly, although there are earlier examples as in the IXth-century manuscript *Paris graec.* 510, the apotropaic value of these devices only became explicit in the late twelfth

<sup>125</sup> K. Kalokyris, "Ανέκδοτοι επιγραφαι και χαράγματα εκ μεσαιωνικών μνημείων Κρήτης", *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 5, 1951, p. 338-339.

<sup>126</sup> N. Ovcárov, "Sur l'iconographie de St. Georges aux XIe-XIIe siècles", *Byzantinoslavica* 52, 1991, p. 121-129. Ch. Walter, "An Apotropaic Sequence at Kardžali (Bulgaria)", *Zograph* 25, 1996, p. 23-26 (The article is reprinted in this volume).

<sup>127</sup> G. Babić, "Les croix à cryptogrammes peintes dans les églises des XIIIe et XVe siècles", *Mélanges Ivan Dujčev, Etudes de civilisation*, edited by S. Dufrenne, Paris 1979, p. 1-13.

century. Originally, IC XC NI KA served principally as an imperial invocation for protection against and victory over enemies. Sometimes, as on the icon of Saint Neophytos and at Platanistasa, it was replaced by the legend IC XC YΘ. The multiplication of devices occurs in other media than church decoration, for example on the reverse of the late XIIIth-century icon at Sinaï and in the manuscript Sinai. 339. The cross itself is the primary element. As a sign of Christ it was already ubiquitous in the late IVth century. John Chrysostom wrote of its presence "everywhere most frequently. It shines on the wall of houses, in books, in cities, villages, in deserted and inhabited places"<sup>128</sup>. There was room for discussion of the relationship of the sign to the person. Theodore Studite insisted that the cross signified Christ; it did not represent him.<sup>129</sup> However, the distinction may have been too subtle to be understood by an amateur theologian. The power of the cross to repel demons dates back to early Christianity, in which it took over the function of the pagan amulet. Cyril of Jerusalem, when instructing his catechumens, stressed the prophylactic power of the sign of the cross: Ο σταυρός είναι μέγα φυλακτήριον σημείον πιστών και φόβος δαιμονίων.<sup>130</sup> It is noteworthy that a similar expression was used by the painter of the parecclesion of Saint John the Baptist at Saint Sophia, Ohrid (1347-1350) in the inscription which accompanies his representation of the Cross. He invokes Christ, "φυλακτήρ μου"<sup>131</sup> (Fig. 299).

The secondary acronyms were not necessarily intended to reiterate the victorious character of the Cross. This was left to the text of our device, which, incidentally, did not attribute victory to the Cross but to Christ himself. However, from the time of Constantine's vision, the Cross was indelibly connected with victory. Even if the victorious formula was imperial in origin, it was also used in ecclesiastical contexts, as, for example, at the Council of Ephesus (431): "Christ, our master, it is you

<sup>128</sup> John Chrysostom, *Contra Iudaeos et Gentiles, quod Christus sit Deus*, PG 48, 826.

<sup>129</sup> Theodore Studite, *Refutatio et subversio impiorum poematum*, PG 99, 457.

<sup>130</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis ad illuminandos* 13 36 (IVth century), PG 33, 816.

<sup>131</sup> G. Subotić, "Ohridski slikar Konstantin i njegov sin Jovan", *Zograf* 5, 1974, p. 44-47.

who have conquered! Oh Cross, it is you who have conquered". Here Christ and the Cross are attributed the same status<sup>132</sup>. The invocation of the Cross in battle would have continued long after our device had disappeared from the imperial repertory<sup>133</sup>.

### Inscriptions

As mentioned above, some acronyms (Babić calls them *cryptograms*) have not yet been deciphered, while others may have more than one meaning. However, generally speaking, their meaning is clear, but their frequency varies considerably. A list now follows of fifteen acronyms in the order of the Greek alphabet of their first letter, together with the name of the churches or objects on which they figure.<sup>134</sup>

1. Α Π Μ C - Αρχή Πίστεως Μυστηρίου Σταυρός: Calendar icon, Sinai; Saint John the Almoner, Trikkala; Peć (twice).
2. Α Χ Χ Π - Αρχή Χριστού Χριστιανικής Πίστεως: Platanistasa (?); Peć.
3. Ε Ε Ε Ε - Ἑλένη Εύρε Ἑλέως Ἐρεσμαι:<sup>135</sup> Calendar icon, Sinai; Saint John the Almoner, Trikkala; Taxiarches, Kastoria; Presentation, Meteora; Gračanica (Fig. 301); Saints Constantine and Helena, Ohrid.
4. Ε Υ Θ Ε - Ἑλένης Υἱός Θεοῦμα Εἶδεν: Staro Nagoričino.

<sup>132</sup> P. Battifol, "Un épisode du concile d'Éphèse, d'après les actes coptes de Bouriant", *Mélanges Schlumberger*, Paris 1925, I, p. 32.

<sup>133</sup> For example, Joseph Genesios, *Historia de rebus constantinopolitanis* IV (mid-11th century), PG 109, 1109. The victorious Saviour's Cross is acclaimed in battle against the Saracens, "The Saviour has conquered".

<sup>134</sup> Among the lists of acronyms, none of them complete, *vid.* particularly G. Lampsakios, "Μελέται, ἐργασίαι καὶ παρατηρήσεις", *DChAH*, Series I, Vol. 2, 1894, p. 49.

<sup>135</sup> Babić notes six alternative readings for this acronym which is also inscribed on some representations of the Cross upheld jointly by Constantine and Helena at Dornja Kamenica, Serbia (Fig. 262) and in the churches of Theokpastos and Saint Sabbas, Trebizond, G. Millet and D. Talbot Rice, *Byzantine Painting at Trebizond*, London, 1936, p. 46, 70, and at Berende (Bulgaria), E. Bakalova, *Stenopisite a cirkovna pri Berende*, Sofia 1976, p. 53-54, figure 46, p. 71. This last example has our legend on the upper bar of the cross and Ε Ε Ε Ε on the central bar.

5. Ε Ω Θ Τ - Ἑλένη Ὡφθη Θεοῦ Τάφος: Saint Nicolas Orphanos, Thessaloniki.
6. Θ Θ Θ Θ - Θέα Θεοῦ Θεῖον Θαύμα: Saint John the Almoner, Trikkala.
7. Ι Χ Υ Θ - Ἰησοῦς Χριστός Υἱός Θεοῦ:<sup>136</sup> Two early icons at Sinai; icon at Saint Neophytos; icon at Platanistasa; Staro Nagoričino (six times); Saint Nicolas Orphanos, Thessaloniki (with a slight variant).
8. Μ Γ Χ Β - Μαριάμ Γεννήσασα Χριστόν Βασιλέα: The icon of the Virgin Eleousa, Saint Neophytos, Cyprus.
9. Ζ Ζ C K - Ζῶλον Ζωῆς Σωτηρία Κόσμου: Calendar icon, Sinai.
10. Ρ Ρ Ρ Ρ - Ρητὸς Ρήτορες Ρητορεύουσι Τῆμα: Taxiarches, Kastoria; Gračanica.
11. Τ Κ Π Γ - Τόπος Κρανίου Παράδεισος Γέγονεν: Saint John the Almoner, Trikkala; Gračanica.
12. Τ Τ Δ Φ - Τοῦτο τὸν Τύπον Δαίμονες Φρίττουσι: Presentation, Meteora; Saint John the Almoner, Trikkala; Platanistasa.
13. Τ Τ Τ Δ - Τοῦτο τὸν Τύπον Τρέμουντι Δαίμονες: Arkadia, Crete.
14. Φ Χ Φ Π - Φῶς Χριστοῦ Φαίνει Πᾶσιν: This acronym was the most popular: Saint Neophytos, Cyprus; Saint Nicolas Orphanos, Thessaloniki; Saint John the Almoner, Trikkala, Sopoćani (Fig. 300); Gračanica (Fig. 301); Arilje (twice); Saints Constantine and Helena, Ohrid<sup>137</sup> (Fig. 298).
15. Χ Χ Χ Χ - Χριστός Χάριν Χριστιανοῖς Χαρίζει: Calendar icon, Sinai; icon of Christ Philanthropos, Neophytos; Presentation, Meteora; Peć (narthex); Saints Constantine and Helena, Ohrid.

These acronyms may be distinguished as belonging to three groups. The first group is made up of those which are concerned with Christ as God or the Son of God (6, 7), as the primary object of faith (2) and as the source of light and joy (14, 15). The second consists of those which are concerned with the Cross. These are either dogmatic prescribing that it is the beginning of faith (1) and exercises a redemptive function (9), or

<sup>136</sup> This acronym probably derives from I John 4, 15, *Jesus is the son of God*.

<sup>137</sup> G. Subotić, *Sveti Konstantin i Jelena u Ohridu*, Belgrade 1971, p. 111. Babić derives the acronym from the liturgy of the presanctified.

topical, concerned with Helena and the Invention of the Cross (3, 4, 8) and with Calvary as the place where Adam's skull was buried (11). The third is concerned with the apotropaic function of the Cross, terror of demons (12, 13). The relevance of (10) is not evident.

Only two of the acronyms derive directly from official sacred texts, the New Testament (7) and the liturgy (14). However, (12) and (13) recall an epigram which Theodore Studite addressed to a cross at the entrance to a church, describing it as a guardian and fearful enemy of demons<sup>138</sup>.

These acronyms are invariably orthodox; they add connotations to the IC XC NI KA of our device. Is it possible to conjecture what motivated their composition? They might be described as a highly sophisticated monastic *jeu d'esprit*, because they continued to be composed on Mount Athos, where, unfortunately, they have not been systematically catalogued and studied<sup>139</sup>. However, one example in the trapeza of Ivron (1848) may give some insight into the spirit in which these acronyms continued to be composed: Φ Φ Φ Φ - Φύλε, Φέρει, Φάγει, Φεύγει!<sup>140</sup> Presumably it is not necessary to translate this for the reader.

## Conclusion

The focal point of this study is the device of a cross accompanied by the acronym IC XC NI KA. Its primary element is the Cross, whose significance, according to the context, is made more precise by the presence of this acronym, and often other secondary ones. These add a further connotation by associating the Cross with Calvary or Saint Helena and possibly by emphasising its redemptive and apotropaic powers.

<sup>138</sup> Theodore Studite, *Epigram* n° 47, PG 99, 1796b; Theodore Studites *Jamben auf verschiedene Gegenstände*, edited by P. Speck, Berlin 1968, p. 199.

<sup>139</sup> P. Uspenskij, *Pervoe put'esostvie v Afonskie monastire i skity* II 2, Moscow 1880, p. 22-26, 180-181; G. Millet etc., *Recueil des inscriptions chrétiennes de l'Athos*, Paris 1904, n° 212, n° 275, n° 393, n° 543.

<sup>140</sup> Millet, n° 275.

In studying the theology of the Cross, cognizance must be taken of two themes: its value as a sign or symbol of Christ (being his principal relic) and its own specific qualities, which albeit derive from Christ.

As a sign of Christ it was ubiquitous in the late fourth century. John Chrysostom wrote of its presence "everywhere most frequently. It shines on the walls of houses, in books, in cities, villages, in deserted and inhabited places"<sup>141</sup>. There was, indeed, room for discussion as to the relationship of the sign to the person. Theodore Studite considered that the cross signified Christ, but did not represent him.<sup>142</sup> Frolow considered that the distinction was too subtle to be intelligible to a non-professional theologian<sup>143</sup>. His opinion is supported by the fact that legends 1 and 2 attribute the beginning of faith to the Cross and Christ respectively, while legend 9 attributes the salvation of the world to the Cross.

A second quality attributed to the Cross, the power to repel demons, dates back to early Christianity, in which it took over the function of the pagan amulet. For example, Cyril of Jerusalem, when instructing his catechumens, stressed the prophylactic power of the sign of the cross: 'Ο σταυρός είναι μέγα φυλακτήριον ... σημειὸν πιστῶν καὶ φόβος δαιμόνων'.<sup>144</sup> Interestingly, a similar expression was used by the painter of the parecclesion of Saint John the Baptist at Saint Sophia, Ohrid (1347-1350) in the inscription which accompanies his representation of the Cross. He invokes Christ crucified as his invulnerable protector (φυλακτήρι μου ἀρρηκτε).<sup>145</sup>

The secondary acronyms do not reiterate the victorious character of the Cross. This was left to the primary one, which, incidentally, attributes victory not directly to the Cross but to Christ. In this respect our device is intriguingly discreet. Even if the Cross had been indelibly connected with victory from the moment of Constantine's vision, some obscurity remains

<sup>141</sup> John Chrysostom, *Contra Judeos et Gentiles, quod Christus sit Deus* (Clavis 4326), PG 48, 826.

<sup>142</sup> Theodore Studite, *Refutatio et subversio impiorum poematum*, PG 99, 457.

<sup>143</sup> Antoine Frolow, IC XC NI KA, p. 103.

<sup>144</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem (IVth century), *Catecheses ad illuminandos* (Clavis 3585), PG 33, 816.

<sup>145</sup> Gojko Subotić, "Ohridski slikar Konstantin i njegov sin Jovan", *Zagrad* 5, 1974, p. 44-47.



as to the precise form that the legend which he read actually took: τοῦτο or ἐν τοῦτο vika? The imperative form of the verb is not in doubt. Thus in his *Life of Constantine* Eusebius wrote τοῦτο vika<sup>146</sup>. However, in the *Homilies* of Gregory of Nazianzus, Paris *graec.* 510, f. 440, ἐν is added<sup>147</sup> (Fig. 47), while in the acclamation of the emperor in the *De ceremoniis*, the verb becomes imperative: ἐν τοῦτο vucāte<sup>148</sup>. However, when Christ or the Cross conquers, the verb is invariably indicative.

Although the victorious formula so often has clear imperial connotations, it was used early in an ecclesiastical context, as, for example, at the Council of Ephesus (431): "Christ, our master, it is you who has conquered! Oh Cross, it is you who has conquered!"<sup>149</sup> However, our device acquired its definitive form in imperial art in the eighth century, perhaps usually as a challenge to the Moslem Arabs. The Cross, regularly invoked (along with the warrior saints) in battle<sup>150</sup>, retained its apotropaic function in all religious media but especially in manuscripts and churches: Christ himself and the Cross on which he was crucified constituted the all-powerful protector against evil.

<sup>146</sup> Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, I 28, p. 81; PG 20, 94.

<sup>147</sup> Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, p. 164.

<sup>148</sup> *De ceremoniis* 169, edited by J.J. Reiske, Bonn 1829, p. 324.

<sup>149</sup> P. Battifol, "Un épisode du concile d'Éphèse, d'après les actes coptes de Beauriant", *Mélanges Schlumberger*, Paris 1925, I, p. 32.

<sup>150</sup> For example, Joseph Genesios, *Historia de rebus constantinopolitanis* IV, PG 109, 1109 (mid-Xth century). The victorious Saviour's Cross is acclaimed in battle against the Saracens, τοῦτο vucāte. Also *vid. sup.* Nicole Thierry, "Le culte de la Croix dans l'empire byzantin du VII<sup>e</sup> siècle au Xe siècle dans ses rapports avec la guerre contre l'infidèle. Nouveaux témoignages archéologiques", *Rivista di studi bizantini e slavi*, *Miscellanea Agostino Pertusi*, I, 1980, p. 208.

## AN APOTROPAIC SEQUENCE AT KARDŽALI

The images, incised on a stone, built into the wall of the church at Kardžali, Haskovo, Bulgaria, have already been accurately presented in two articles by the Bulgarian scholar Nikolaj Ovčarov<sup>1</sup> (Fig. 302). However, although he presented the images and inscriptions accurately, he did not study their significance in depth. I attempt to do so in this article.

Recently Jean-Michel Spieser published a current definition of apotropaic – a word used somewhat loosely – as applying to objects or pictures invoking supernatural protection with a symbolic significance rather than magical. He proposed a modification of this definition: symbolic and apotropaic are two facets of the sacred, the first serving as a gloss and the second the effect which is anticipated<sup>2</sup>. I retain Spieser's definition, particularly because it eliminates a term which is even more loosely used: magic<sup>3</sup>. However, the word apotropaic also has a wide range of use both in time and in forms of expression (image, symbol, inscription).

<sup>1</sup> Nikolaj Ovčarov, "K'm Ikonografijata na njakoi sveti prez X-XIV v.", *Archeologija* 24 2, 1982, p. 43-50. *Idem*, "Sur l'iconographie de Saint Georges aux XIe-XIIe siècles", *Byzantinoslavica* 52, 1991, p. 121-129. (This article is a revised version of my article on the same subject published in *Zograf* 25, Belgrade 1996, p. 19-22.)

<sup>2</sup> J.-M. Spieser, "Portes, limites et organisation de l'espace dans les églises paléochrétiennes", *Klio* 77, 1995, p. 434, note 10.

<sup>3</sup> H. Maguire explains this word as meaning propitious or apotropaic, "Magic and Geometry in Early Christian Floor Mosaics and Textiles", *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 44, 1994, p. 265. However, differences in the meaning attributed to the word magic are so many that perhaps it is best to avoid its use. Ch. Walter, "The Intaglio of Solomon in the Benaki Museum and the Origins of the Iconography of Warrior Saints", *DChAH*, Series IV, Vol. 15, 1989-1990, p. 34-36 (reprinted, *Pictures as Language*, XXIII, p. 399-401).

One broad distinction which may be helpful, would be to distinguish personal objects, such as amulets, from public objects, such as churches. On public objects, the symbolic aspect is usually at least as important as the apotropaic, whereas on personal objects the repertory of subjects includes some symbols rarely or never found on public objects.

On the stone at Kardžali, the acronym IC XC NI KA is repeated three times. Since I have published a study of it already<sup>4</sup>, it is unnecessary to enlarge on its significance here. The others are the titles of the two saints represented, Stephen and George. However, it is worth recalling the ancient study by L. Jalabert<sup>5</sup>, which provides a comprehensive list of biblical citations in Greek epigraphy; he exemplified the difficulties inherent in the use of a lucid terminology for presenting them. He cites the opinion current in his time according to which, although the choice of inscriptions in a Christian building might be motivated by the pride which Christians took in their religion, by a tendency to proselytise, or by a desire for security. In most cases the dominant motive was interest, superstition or a desire for good luck. Jalabert, for his part, maintained that these inscriptions were, above all, prophylactic, calling as they did in a great number of cases for the protection of the Lord<sup>6</sup>.

The protective or prophylactic character of apotropaic inscriptions naturally had its equivalent in images and signs. These, inherited from Antiquity in many cases, were either transmitted by the Jews or taken over directly by Christians. As E.R. Goodenough observed pertinently, "A new religion may take over the old magic signs, names, mottoes; the Christians wanted to keep what was effective in the old but to add a new Christian potency to it"<sup>7</sup>.

The case of Solomon on horseback, represented on private objects, illustrates this point well<sup>8</sup>. Solomon was retained on Christian amulets,

<sup>4</sup> Ch. Walter, "IC XC NI KA. The Apotropaic Function of the Victorious Cross", *REB* 55, 1997, p. 196-220 (republished in this book).

<sup>5</sup> L. Jalabert, "Citations bibliques dans l'iconographie grecque, IV. Sens et portée des inscriptions bibliques," *DACL* III 2 (1914), 1748-1756.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, 1750-1751.

<sup>7</sup> E.R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period II*, New York 1953-1968, p. 231.

<sup>8</sup> Walter, *art. cit* (note 3), p. 40-42.

but he was progressively modified. A man or a dragon, sometimes with a human head, replaced the female figure which had earlier been speared by Solomon. When the iconographical type was taken up on public objects, Solomon was transformed into a warrior saint. It became, perhaps, the most popular apotropaic image. The warrior saint offered protection against specific enemies, the Turks of course, but also the Venetians in Crete and the Hungarians in Transylvania<sup>9</sup>. Another development was to place a portrait of its patron saint over the door of a church. An outstanding example of ecclesiastical use of such apotropaic imagery is provided by the bas-reliefs at the entrance to the narthex at Koca kalesi (Alahan, Isauria)<sup>10</sup>. A bust of Christ in a medallion over the door is held up by flying angels, while on the side pillars to left and right an angel in military uniform crushes a demon. This imagery is susceptible of various interpretations. However, it is clearly apotropaic, protecting either the building or those who enter it from evil.

The origin of the three acronyms in the Kardžali sequence IC XC NI KA cannot be fixed with certitude. It may date back to the reign of Justinian<sup>11</sup>. Another early example is the inscription below a medallion containing a cross on the north side of the apse in the church called Açıkel Ağa kilisesi, Hasan Dağı; it is variously dated from the VIIIth to the early Xth century<sup>12</sup>. What is peculiar in the Kardžali sequence is the

<sup>9</sup> Ecaterina Cincheza-Buculei, "Implicatii sociale si politice in iconografia picturii medievale românești din Transilvania, secolele XIV-XV", *Studii si cercetări de istoria artei* 28, 1981, p. 1-34.

<sup>10</sup> This monument has a considerable bibliography: N. and J.-M. Thierry, "Le monastère de Koca Kalesi en Isaurie. La porte d'une église", *CahArch* 9, 1959, p. 88-98; D. Winfield, "Some Early Medieval Figure Sculpture from North-East Turkey", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 31, 1968, p. 33-72; N. Thierry, "Notes sur l'un des bas-reliefs d'Alahan manastiri en Isaurie", *CahArch* 13, 1963, p. 43-47; A. Grabar, "Deux portraits sculptés paléochrétiens d'Égypte et d'Asie Mineure et les portails romans", *CahArch* 20, 1970, p. 16-28; Alahan, an *Early Christian Monastery in Southern Turkey*, edited by Mary Gough, Toronto 1985; Cyril Mango, "Germia: a Post-Script", *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 41, 1991, p. 298-300.

<sup>11</sup> Michele Piccirillo, *Chiese e Mosaici di Masaba*, Jerusalem 1989, p. 118, cites an example in a Vth-century cistern at Masaba.

<sup>12</sup> Catherine Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines de Cappadoce*, Paris 1991, p. 327-329.

triple repetition of the acronym such as occurs on personal apotropaic objects like armbands.<sup>15</sup> Each time it is spelt incorrectly (IC C NH KA; IC +C NI K; IC XS NI K). These peculiarities give no clue to the date of the inscription, but they suggest that the person who incised it was probably not Greek.

The inscriptions which accompany the representations of Saint Stephen and Saint George are also garbled: α στρω τρω[?]τ (probably ὁ ἅγιος Στέφανος τρωτός) and ο α ρεοπ[?]τ (some letters are Cyrillic, an indication that the inscription was incised by a Bulgarian rather than a Greek).

Saint Stephen wears a tunic and, possibly an oration; he holds a censer and a coffer. Usually in early portraits, as at Dörres<sup>14</sup>, Stephen was not liturgically dressed. Nevertheless, on a cross in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, he does hold a censer and coffer (Fig. 303). Margaret Frazer dated this cross to the VIth or VIIth century<sup>15</sup>. In monumental art, the earliest known representations of Stephen liturgically dressed are in the Cappadocian churches of İsmail Dere, n° 1, at Mustafapaşa<sup>16</sup>, and of Yılanlı kilise at Hasan Dağı<sup>17</sup> (Fig. 304).

Saint George has no specific attributes. Ovčarov's observation that his tunic could be cited as evidence of an early date is far from being decisive. There are early portraits of Saint George in Cappadocia dressed as a martyr and holding a cross in the church of Açıkel ağa kilisesi at Belisırma (VIIIth-IXth century)<sup>18</sup>, in Comlekçi kilisesi at Güzeyurt (ca 900?)<sup>19</sup>, at Göreme n° 9 (first half of the XIth century)<sup>20</sup> and at Tokalı II,

<sup>15</sup> Gary Vikan, "Two Byzantine Amuletic Armbands and the Group to Which They Belong", *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 49-50, 1991-1992, p. 33-51, figures 8-10.

<sup>16</sup> Robin Cormack, *Writing in Gold*, London 1985, suggests a VIth-century date for this painting.

<sup>17</sup> *Age of Spirituality*, edited by Kurt Weitzmann, New York 1979, p. 621-622, n° 557; Gary Vikan, "Art, Medicine and Magic in Early Byzantium", *DOP* 28, 1984, p. 85, figure 28, with a specific reference to Stephen's censer and coffer.

<sup>18</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises Byzantines*, p. 192.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 307-310; N and M. Thierry, *Nouvelles églises de Cappadoce, région de Hasan Dağı*, Paris 1963, p. 108, figure 55c.

<sup>20</sup> Jolivet-Lévy, p. 327-328, plate 182, figure 2.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 110.

at Göreme n° 7 (XIth or XIIth century)<sup>21</sup>. However, there are much later representations of him similarly dressed, for example on an icon at Struga (XVth or XVIth century)<sup>22</sup>. On the other hand, he was represented in military dress as early as the late VIth or VIIth century, for example at Bawit<sup>23</sup>. Although the Schlumberger cross cannot be dated securely<sup>24</sup> (Fig. 305), the descriptions of Saint George in the *Life* of Theodore of Sykeon, probably written in the early VIIth century, imply that then he was already venerated principally as a warrior<sup>25</sup>.

The cult of both saints was sufficiently popular and widespread to make their presence in an apotropaic sequence unproblematic. Equally the presence of the Cross, the most popular and enduring of Christian prophylactic signs, calls for no special explanation. However, the extension of the central arm to form part of a pentagram is unusual. Ever since the time of Perdrizet<sup>26</sup> – and probably earlier – the pentagram, also known as *pentalpha*, has been considered to have been one of the two devices represented on Solomon's seal. One device, commonly found on Solomonic amulets, was a rider spearing a prostrate woman with a spear; it does not concern us here. The other, the pentagram, was never, as far as I am aware, marked on amulets. Its association with Solomon is tenuous. It derives from a passage in *The Testament of Solomon* in which it is recounted how Solomon received a ring from the archangel Michael on which the *pentalpha* was marked.

This phrase occurs only in two late manuscripts of the *Testament*, Paris Bibliothèque nationale cod. 38 (XVIth century) and Athos, Convent

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 294.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 104.

<sup>22</sup> Gordana Babić, *Ikone*, Zagreb 1980, n° 45, p. 27.

<sup>23</sup> J. Clédat, "Baouit", *DACL* II, column 221, figure 1263; M. Krause and K. Wessel, "Bawit", *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst* I, 580-582; Ch. Walter, "The Origin of the Cult of Saint George", *REB* 53, 1995, p. 317-318.

<sup>24</sup> Walter, *ibidem*, p. 318.

<sup>25</sup> Ch. Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition*, Aldershot 2003, p. 115-117; *Vie de Théodore de Sykeon*, edited by A.-J. Festugière, Brussels 1970, *passim*.

<sup>26</sup> P. Perdrizet, "ΣΦΡΑΓΙΣ ΣΟΛΟΜΟΝΩΣ", *Revue des études grecques* 16, 1903, p. 56-57; *Idem*, *Negotium perambulans in tenebris*, Strasbourg 1922, p. 33; Gary Vikan, *Byzantine Pilgrimage Art*, Washington 1982, p. 35.



of Andreas, cod. 73<sup>27</sup>. The former manuscript was no doubt used to establish the version published by Migne, upon which scholars have usually been obliged to rely<sup>28</sup>. It was D.C. Duling who first collated the earlier manuscripts, and, in his translation of the *Testament*, omitted the reference to the pentagram on Solomon's ring<sup>29</sup>.

It does not follow that the pentagram was not a potent symbol, only that its passage from Antique to Jewish usage must be explained independently of Solomonic tradition. Its primary purpose was to ensure good health. As such, it was popular among the Pythagoreans<sup>30</sup>. However, the most striking example is to be found on a late Antique doctor's stamp in the History Museum, Basle. It is thus described by Gary Vikan: "Running clockwise around its circumference is the word *hygieia*, while at its centre is a *theta*, which, according to Dölger's persuasive argument stands for *thanatos*. Between health and death, literally enclosing and trapping death, is the *pentalpha*"<sup>31</sup>.

The symbol was used on bracelets, whose amuletic potency was enhanced by combining it with other pagan symbols as well as Jewish and Christian ones, for example on the Fouquet armband in Cairo<sup>32</sup>, and on another armband in the Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Missouri-Columbia<sup>33</sup>. In some cases it is difficult to determine the religious tradition to which the pentagram belonged any more than its precise purpose. A pentagram represented above an inscription on a pyramid at Abydos was probably pagan (Ptolemaic)<sup>34</sup>. Pentagrams have

also been found in Palestine on Jewish jar-handles and bowls sometimes accompanied by the letters J H V H<sup>35</sup>. Another remarkable example is on a Jewish tombstone in Spain, which Goodenough would date to the late IVth or Vth century. There are inscriptions in Latin, Greek and Hebrew<sup>36</sup>. The Hebrew inscription is conventional: "Peace to Israel. This is the tomb of Meliosa, daughter of Judah and the lady Miriam"; it begins and ends with a pentagram.

Perdrizet suggested ingeniously that a pentagram, like a cross, at the beginning or end of a text might be the sign of a gesture to be made<sup>37</sup>. If he is right, the cross whose central arm is prolonged into the pentagram on the stone at Kardžali may signify that both gestures were to be made after contemplating the portraits which precede them. Our knowledge of the history of the pentagram in Byzantine tradition is far from complete. In fact there are no certain examples between the VIth-century armbands and a XVIth-century formula for the exorcism of worm in sheep<sup>38</sup>. Occult Western texts about the pentagram were known to Goethe, for whom the sign had wide prophylactic power against evil. Faust, addressing Mephistopheles said: "Das Pentagram macht dir Pein?"<sup>39</sup>.

In conclusion, it may be said that, in spite of incertitude about its date, the sequence incised on the stone at Kardžali merits an enquiry in depth. It is evident that the stone did not originate at the church: it came from elsewhere and was built into the wall. In spite of the crudeness of the execution of the sequence, its message can be deciphered. Similar legends are not found on buildings, but are known on armbands and other personal objects, examples of which have been mentioned in the preceding text. Hopefully, similar sequences inscribed on stone will be discovered. They would help to establish more securely the place of the Kardžali stone in the history of Byzantine art.

<sup>27</sup> D.C. Duling, *Apocalyptic Literature and Testament*, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, edited by H. Charlesworth, London 1983, p. 962.

<sup>28</sup> PG 122, column 1317b. C. Mc Cow's edition, *The Testament of Solomon*, Leipzig 1922, has unfortunately not been available to me.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* (note 27).

<sup>30</sup> According to H. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, the Pythagoreans first used the words *νεκροτροποιον* and *νεκροταγα*.

<sup>31</sup> Vikan, *art. cit.* (note 15), p. 69, figure 4.

<sup>32</sup> J. Maspero, "Bracelets-amulettes d'époque byzantine", *Annales des services des antiquités d'Égypte* 9, 1908, p. 248-249; Vikan, *art. cit.* (note 15), p. 75, note 53, figure 8.

<sup>33</sup> Henry Maguire, *art. cit.* (note 3), p. 274, figure 27.

<sup>34</sup> P. Perdrizet and G. Lefebvre, *Les graffiti grecs du mennonion d'Abydos*, Strasbourg 1919, p. 99.

<sup>35</sup> D. Düringer, *Le iscrizioni antiche-ebraiche Palastinesi*, Florence 1934, p. 130-134, plate XVI, figures 3-12; Goodenough, *op. cit.* (note 7), I, p. 68.

<sup>36</sup> Goodenough, II, p. 58, III, figure 858.

<sup>37</sup> Perdrizet, *op. cit.* note 26.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 37.

<sup>39</sup> Perdrizet, *art. cit.* (note 26), p. 56-57.

## SEVERED HEADS AND HEADS AS TROPHIES

The following articles are concerned with three "kephalophoros" Byzantine saints, George, Zosimos and Vladimir, all martyred warriors. They are so called, because they hold a second head in their hands as a trophy. Although it was common, particularly in Western art of the Middle Ages, for martyrs to be represented holding their severed head in their hands, this was not a *second* head<sup>1</sup>. In Byzantine art it seems that Saint Paraskeve was the only other martyr to be represented in this way, although Saint John the Baptist was often represented holding his severed head, and there is an apparently unique example of Saint Paul doing the same at Krina, Chios<sup>2</sup> (Fig. 142). Severed heads, in fact, were a rich subject with many variants, both in legend and in art.

## SEVERED HEADS IN ANTIQUITY

They recur commonly in Antiquity, both in anecdotes and, particularly, on Greek vases. This was a subject on which I gave a lecture, which was never published, at the British School of Archaeology in Athens over a decade ago. It was concerned with the Deaths of Astyanax and Troilos at Troy (two themes which are sometimes confused), Medusa's Head in the legend of Perseus and the Head of Orpheus as an oracle. The ensuing pages are a slightly adapted version of this lecture.

<sup>1</sup> *Vid. infra.*

<sup>2</sup> Ch. Walter, "The Portrait of Saint Paraskeve", *Byzantinoslavica* 56, p. 753-757, reprinted in *Pictures as Language*, XXII, p. 383-394; *Idem*, "Salome and the Head of Saint John the Baptist", *Revue des études arméniennes* 23, 1992, p. 509-523, reprinted, *Pictures as Language*, XVIII, p.321-333. Ch. Pennas, who has studied the church and dates it between 1197 and 1296, kindly informed about the picture of Saint Paul.

## Astyanax and Troilos

Astyanax, the infant son of Hector, was killed by being hurled from the walls of Troy after the city was sacked<sup>3</sup>. His violent death was attributed to Odysseus but more often to Neoptolemos, the son of Achilles. Normally Neoptolemos holds the naked child by the foot. However, on a *lekythus*, a thin narrow-necked vase, from Eritrea n° 11050 in the National Museum of Athens (formerly the property of the British School), Priam is seated beside an altar. Behind it stands a mourning woman, either Hecuba or Andromache, the child's mother. Neoptolemos holds the severed head of Astyanax as if he was about to fling it at Priam. Troilos, Priam's son, was killed by Achilles while still a youth<sup>4</sup> outside Troy at the beginning of the Trojan War. On Greek vases the scene was set either on the battlefield or in the sanctuary of Apollo Thymbraios. Generally Achilles holds the body of the naked youth by the foot or the hair. However, the severed head of Troilos figures on three objects. On vase n° 1436 in the Museum in Munich, the body of Troilos lies between the standing figures of Hector and Achilles who are facing each other. The severed head of Troilos is held aloft, impaled on their spears. On a Tyrrhenian amphora in the Museum in Florence, n° 70993, Hector and Achilles again face each other with the body of Troilos lying between them. However, this time Achilles holds the severed head of Troilos by the hair in his right hand. A third example is on a *hydria*, a pitcher with three handles, from Vulci in the British Museum, n° 326 (Fig. 307). Achilles is represented facing two Trojan warriors. Between them the body of Troilos lies on an altar, while Achilles again holds his severed head aloft in his right hand.

Neither in the case of Astyanax nor in that of Troilos are there any literary sources for these gratuitous acts of violence towards the severed head. However, there are later analogies, as, for example in the *Bacchae*, when Agave enters holding the severed head of her son Pentheus. In art, representations of are known only of Pentheus being torn to pieces by the

<sup>3</sup> Charlotte Mota, "Sur les représentations figurées de la mort de Troilos et la mort d'Astyanax", *Revue archéologique* 50, 1957, p. 25-44.

<sup>4</sup> *Vid. preceding note.*

Maenads. Plutarch recounts another analogy in his *Life of Crassus*. When the *Bacchae* was being performed in the banquet hall of the Parthians, the head of Crassus was hurled in just at the moment when Agave was about to make her speech. Jason of Tralles picked up the head and was about to sing Agave's part when the Parthian Pomaxathros, who had actually killed Crassus, intervened. He took the head and, when the chorus sang: "Who killed him?", he replied: "Mine is the honour." Apparently there is no representation of this incident in art.

### Gorgoneion and Perseus

Strictly speaking, the Gorgoneion was not a severed head but a hideous mask, an apotropaic image represented on warriors' shields and already mentioned by Homer. It was a symbol of human aggression which then became an element of warriors' armour as early as the VIIth century B.C. An apotropaic Gorgoneion is represented on a warrior's shield on a crater (a bowl used in ancient Greece for mixing wine) in the Campana collection, now in the Louvre. The head of the Gorgoneion, not necessarily detached from a body, continued to be used apotropaically, as, for example at the temple of Artemis in Corcyra in the early VIth century B.C., by which time the myth of Perseus was current<sup>5</sup>.

The following elements of the myth are relevant to the present study. Perseus and his mother Danaë were washed up on the island of Seriphos, where the ruler Polydectes fell amorous of Danaë. Medusa was the only Gorgon not to be immortal. Perseus offered to obtain her head, which had the power of turning whoever looked at it into stone, for Polydectes. Hermes and Athena gave Perseus their help. He set off on his mission provided with a satchel, a helmet of invisibility, winged sandals and a sharp sword. Athena held up her polished bronze shield in which Medusa's head was reflected. This made it possible for Perseus to sever it without the risk of being petrified. He then placed the severed head in his satchel. Thanks to his helmet of invisibility, Perseus escaped the two other Gorgons, to whom Athena barred the way. On his return journey to Seriphos, Perseus rescued Andromeda from the sea monster. He wished

to take Andromeda as his bride, but Cepheus, her father, was opposed to this. Thanks to Medusa, Cepheus was frustrated. When Medusa's head was displayed to him, he was petrified. Back at Seriphos, Perseus rescued his mother Danaë from the attentions of Cepheus who was also petrified by the sight of Medusa's head. Perseus then gave the head to Athena who placed it on her shield.

The myth of Perseus is said to have developed gradually through the lost tetralogy (a group of four dramas, three tragic and one satirical) of Aeschylus and Pindar to Apollodorus. It became a favourite theme of Greek vase-painters. Sometimes they depicted narrative scenes of Perseus fleeing while Athena barred the way to the pursuing Gorgons. Two examples of these scenes may be adduced. One is on an *oinochos*, a wine cup, in the Museo de Spina, Ferrara; another is on a *hydria* in the British Museum. The head of Medusa is represented more or less naturally on a South Italian amphora in the Hermitage, Saint Petersburg, or as a Gorgoneion on a vase in the Museum at Munich. The petrification of Polydectes appears on a bell crater in the Museo civico, Bologna (Fig. 307a). Perseus is also commonly represented with Athena to whom he had already presented the head of Medusa. The goddess holds the head aloft while Perseus gazes at its reflection in water, as on a crater at Gotha (Fig. 307b). This became a genre scene which was taken up by the Etruscans for decorating mirrors; there is an example in the British Museum. Another common genre scene portrays satyrs covering their eyes so as not to be petrified by the sight of Medusa; there are two examples in the Museum at Bonn and one in the Hermitage. A conjectural explanation of the popularity of his scene is that, since satyrs were notorious for their lasciviousness, the function of Medusa's head was to induce frigidity as a punishment for sexual excess.

### Orpheus

This renowned singer<sup>6</sup> was torn to pieces either by Maenads or by Thracian women. His severed head, still singing, floated on the waves to Lesbos (Mytilene), where it gave oracles. In his *Life of Apollonius of*

<sup>5</sup> J. Woodward, *Perseus. A Study in Greek Art and Legend*, Cambridge 1937; K. Schauenburg, *Perseus in der Kunst des Altertums*, Bonn 1960.

<sup>6</sup> W. Déonna, "Orphée et l'oracle de la tête coupée", *Revue des études grecques* 38, 1925, p. 44-69.



Tyana, which he wrote about 200 A.D., Philostratus recounted that when Apollo visited Lesbos he found the head of Orpheus still chanting an oracular strain. Suppressing the oracle, Apollo said: "Leave my business to me. I have borne long enough with your singing".

The Head of Orpheus as an oracle was represented fairly frequently. It appears in its simplest form on a gem formerly in the Cook collection; a youth is writing down the oracle's message. A more complex scene figures on Etruscan mirrors (Fig. 308), one in the Louvre and another in the Museum at Chiuri, probably dated to the end of the IVth century B.C. Two Greek vases at Queen's College, Cambridge, are decorated with a scene of Apollo visiting Lesbos. Even after Apollo had suppressed the oracle, the Head of Orpheus was held in honour. It was probably the archetype of Polycritus, who returned from the shades and devoured his infant child, leaving only its head which emitted oracles.

In sum, each of these three traditions attributes a different significance to the severed head. In the case of Astyanax and Troilus it is the object of violence and ignominy. The Gorgoneion and Medusa exercise apotropaical or magical powers. The head of Orpheus acts as an oracle. It must now be asked what relevance these traditions have to the function and iconography of the Byzantine "Kephalphoros" martyrs.

Severed heads were not considered to have powers of petrification. An analogous instance might be that of the Holy Face of Edessa, the *sudarium* on which Christ had miraculously imprinted his features, because it saved the city of Edessa from the invading Persians. It was indeed conjectured by André Grabar that the Xth-century artist who first painted the Holy Face was familiar with the appearance and function of the Gorgoneion. Orpheus, as a person, was popular in Christian tradition from the earliest times. In fact he was represented in the catacombs taming wild beasts. A much later analogy is that of the head of a soldier in the army of king Sigismund. When he fell in the Battle of Nicopolis (1396) his head confessed his sins. After the soldier had received absolution, his head spoke no more.

Analogies also occur in the occult practice of necromancy. The severed head of a child, placed on a consecrated host or on a leaf of gold inscribed with the name of a demon, would emit oracles. Events in

Celtic<sup>7</sup> or Nordic tradition recall the legend of Orpheus, although a direct connection is hardly likely. Odin is said to have consulted the dead sage and hero Mimir who replied in oracles. However, such cases belong to folklore rather than to reputable history. Déonna is probably right to say that "*Ce sont là des usages universels ... une donnée instinctive.*"

The authentic precedents for severed heads in Antique art occur rather on public monuments like the columns in Rome. For example, on Trajan's column, erected in 113 A.D., soldiers are bringing the heads of dead Dacians to the emperor (Fig. 310), while on the Colonna Antonina the execution of the Quadi rebels is actually represented<sup>8</sup> (Fig. 311). The theme of the severed head of an enemy required little adaptation in order to turn an object of ignominy into an object of cult.

## SEVERED HEADS IN BIBLICAL AND EARLY MEDIEVAL TRADITION

In the *Old Testament* severed heads of enemies were occasionally important. It is only necessary to recall the history of David and Goliath (I *Samuel* 17, 46-51) and of Judith and Holofernes (*Judith* 13, 8). Some Byzantine miniatures of victors carrying heads severed in battle may be adduced. For example, in the XIth-century *Octateuch*, Vatican *graeus* 746, f. 480v, and in the XIIIth-century Vatopedi 602, f. 480v, soldiers are portrayed presenting the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gedeon (*Judges* 7, 25)<sup>9</sup> (Fig. 143). In the *New Testament*, the decapitation of Saint John the Baptist gave rise to a considerable repertoire of both legends and

<sup>7</sup> Pierre Lambrechts, *L'exaltation de la tête dans la pensée et dans l'art des Celtes*, Bruges 1954.

<sup>8</sup> Ch. Walter, "The London September Metaphrast Additional 11870", *Pictures as Language*, p. 128, figure 25.

<sup>9</sup> J. Lowden, "The Production of the Vatopedi Octateuch", *DOP* 36, 1982, p. 124-125, figures 25, 26; Ch. Walter, "Three Notes on the Iconography of Dionysius the Areopagite," *REB* 48, 1990, p. 273, figure 10, reprinted *Prayer and Power*, III, *Athos*, III, fig. 158, p. 280.

iconography<sup>10</sup>. However, by far the most numerous, especially in the West, were the legends and portrayals of martyred saints holding their severed heads. Probably the earliest of these saints was Saint Dionysius the Areopagite, who was confused with Saint Denis<sup>11</sup>. It seems that their legend first developed in the West and then spread to Constantinople.

There is a considerable literature about Western martyrs carrying their severed head.<sup>12</sup> According to legend, they carried their severed head to the place which was to be their sanctuary. Unlike some Eastern martyrs, they did not carry a second head as a trophy. There exist also portrayals of several martyrs grouped together holding their severed head. One example is a painting of Saint Denis with Charlemagne in the Louvre (Fig. 312). Another is of Saints Lucian, Maxian and Julian on a reliquary from the *Sainte-Chapelle*, now in the Musée national du Moyen Age, Paris (Fig. 141). Two other examples may be cited from manuscripts in the *Landesbibliothek*, Stuttgart, dating from the XIIIth century. In the codex *Hist. fol.* 415, f. 69v, at the top of the miniature busts of headless saints are set out in a circle (Fig. 309). At the top one decapitated saint holds his head in the hands. In the centre of the circle the heads of the other saints are placed in a recipient<sup>13</sup>. In another codex, fol. 57, f. 101, Saint Alban, holding his severed head, is placed in the letter P<sup>14</sup> (Fig. 306).

### SAINT GEORGE "KEPHALOPHOROS"

Although it is not the earliest known example of Saint George "kephalophoros", an icon (1) at Čajniče in Bosnia, dated 1574, is a good

<sup>10</sup> Ch. Walter, "The Invention of the Head of Saint John the Baptist in the Wall-Calendar at Gračanica. Its Place in Byzantine Iconographical Tradition", *Zbornik za likovne umetnosti* 16, 1980, p. 71-83; reprinted, *Pictures as Language*, p. 300-320.

<sup>11</sup> Ch. Walter, "Three Notes on the Iconography of Dionysius the Areopagite", *REB* 48, 1990, p. 255-274; reprinted, *Prayer and Power*, III.

<sup>12</sup> Notably, P. Saintyves, "Les saints céphalophores", *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 99, 1929, p. 158-231. For other publications, *vid.* Ch. Walter, *art. cit.*, note 11, p. 270, notes 11 and 12.

<sup>13</sup> K. Löffler, *Romanische Zierbuchstaben*, Stuttgart 1927, p. 40, plate 29.

<sup>14</sup> A. Boeckler, *Das Stuttgarter Passionale*, Augsburg 1923.

starting point<sup>15</sup> (Fig. 144). Biographical icons of Saint George are fairly common<sup>16</sup>, but this one in Čajniče is special because the central portrait of Saint George represents him as "kephalophoros". He is being crowned by Christ. Both Christ and Saint George hold unrolled scrolls, on which are inscribed the words of a dialogue between them. The text of the dialogue, when in Greek, apart from orthographical errors, is generally the same: ὁράς τι πεπράχασιν ἄνομοι, Λόγε. ὁράς κεφαλὴν ὑπὸ σου τετμημένην (See what [the] lawless have done, oh Word! You see [my] head cut off your sake). ὁρῶ σε, μάρτυς, καὶ δίδωμι σοὶ στέφος (I see you, martyr, and I give you [a] crown). Since it is hardly likely that the same text was "invented" each time that it was represented (on this icon it has been translated into Slavonic), it is likely that a typical iconography was established early and then followed or adapted in subsequent representations. A number of paintings or icons of Saint George "kephalophoros" have been published and are consequently well known. The two early ones, which are dated, are on Mount Athos. Both were attributed to the painter Antonios by Manolis Chatzidakis<sup>17</sup>. The first from 1545 is a wall-painting (2) in the *catholicon* of Xenophontos on the north wall of the cross (Fig. 313). Saint George is represented full length, wearing a mantle over his armour and carrying a spear and sword

<sup>15</sup> Đj. Mazalić, "Nekoliko starih ikona Sv. Đorđa sa legendom", *Naše starine*, Sarajevo 2, 1954, p. 65-69; Lj. Kojić, "O ikoni Sv. Đorđa sa žitjem iz Čajniča, *Zbornik za likovne umetnosti* 7, 1971, p. 237-244; E.S. Ovčinnikova, "Ikona Georgij s otsečennoj golovoj v sobranii Moskovogo istoričeskogo museja", *Vizantija južnie Slavyane i drevnaya Rus' zapadnaya Evropa (Festschrift V. Lazarev)*, Moscow 1973, p. 168. This article is an adapted version of one with the same title, which I published in *ΕΥΦΡΟΣΥΝΟΝ (Festschrift Manolis Chatzidakis)*, Athens 1992, p. 694-703. In order to facilitate comparisons and cross references, the icons are numbered in the order of their presentation.

<sup>16</sup> Walter, *Warrior Saints*, p. 138; K. Charalampidis, *Ο αποκεφαλισμός των μαρτύρων εις τας ιστοριοφιλολογικάς πηγὰς καὶ τὴν βυζαντινὴν τέχνην*, second edition, Athens 1989, p. 82-90, 163-181; *Ibidem*, "Παρατηρήσεις σε εικονογραφικές παραστάσεις του Αγ. Γεωργίου στο Αγ. Όρος", *Μακεδονικά* 25, 1986, p. 363-370.

<sup>17</sup> M. Chatzidakis, "Note sur le peintre Antoine de l'Athos", *Studies in Memory of David Talbot Rice*, Edinburgh 1975, p. 83-93; *Idem*, *Ελληνες ζωγράφοι μετὰ τὴν ὥληση I*, Athens 1987, Αντώνιος (2), p. 171-172.

of which only the scabbard is visible<sup>18</sup>. He holds both the scroll and the severed head, which is haloed, in his left hand. His right hand is held out towards Christ, whose bust emerges from a segment in the top right-hand corner. Christ holds a scroll in his left hand and with his right hand extends a crown towards Saint George. The saint's figure resembles that on a Cretan (3) triptych in the K. Levendis collection, dated by Nano Chatzidakis to the second half of the XVth century<sup>19</sup>. However, the painting at Xenophontos has no specifically Cretan traits.

It is otherwise with the second icon (4) which M. Chatzidakis described. It is in the chapel of Saint George at Saint Paul's, Mount Athos, and dated to 1552 (Fig. 314). The composition is in the form of a Deësis with Christ enthroned in the centre. Saint Paul of Xeropotamou, who stands to the right, offers Christ a model of the chapel. Saint George, who stands to the left, offers Christ his severed head, haloed and crowned, from which blood drips<sup>20</sup>. Saint George himself is also crowned, but, instead of wearing armour, he is dressed in a tunic and mantle. This was unusual for Saint George, although other warrior saints were frequently dressed in this way<sup>21</sup>. Another rare but outstanding example of the saint in civil dress is the splendid biographical icon (5) at Struga, Macedonia, although this one betrays no Cretan influence<sup>22</sup>. On the other hand the Saint Paul's icon (4) has a number of stylistic traits which suggest that the painter had some familiarity with the work of Cretan painters, possibly then working on Mount Athos. The rendering is soft and elegant, and the lining of the saint's mantle is decorated with a delicate pattern. On this icon neither Christ nor Saint George holds an inscribed roll.

<sup>18</sup> J. Duchesne & M. Bayet, *Mémoire sur une mission au Mont Athos*, Paris 1876, p. 307-308; G. Millet, *Monuments de l'Athos*, Paris 1927, figure 176.

<sup>19</sup> Nano Chatzidakis, *Icons of the Cretan School*, Catalogue of exhibition, Benaki Museum, Athens 1983, n° 38, p. 4.

<sup>20</sup> M. Chatzidakis, *art. cit.*, note 17, figure 48b.

<sup>21</sup> Walter, *Warrior Saints*, p. 270-274, where a number of examples are cited.

<sup>22</sup> V. Durić, *Ikone iz Jugoslavije*, Catalogue of exhibition, Belgrade 1961, n° 29, p. 102, dating it to the third quarter of the XIVth century; K. Balabanov, *Freske iz ikone a Makedoniji*, Belgrade/Zagreb, n° 80, p. 141, 158, dating it to the XVth century; Gordana Babić, *Ikone*, Zagreb 1980, dating it to the XVth-XVth century.

The central figure of the biographical icon (6) at Blagaj, Hercegovina, also betrays Cretan influence<sup>23</sup>. A date in the early XVIIIth century has been proposed for it. Saint George is represented three-quarter length. Christ again crowns him from the upper right hand segment. The severed head is also crowned and haloed. Saint George's scroll, which hangs from the halo, has an unusual inscription in Slavonic: "See your glory due to the warrior's murder", while Christ's scroll is not unfolded. The icon is popular in style.

An icon (7) at Zographou, Mount Athos (Fig. 164), also late, resembles that (4) at Saint Paul's (Fig. 160). Saint George here is also wearing a tunic and mantle; he is accompanied by Saint Demetrius and holds his severed head in his left hand<sup>24</sup>. The segment is placed at the top in the centre, from which he extends a crown to both saints. Apart from their names in Slavonic, there are no inscriptions.

Five representations of Saint George "kephalophoros" present him in bust form (8, 9, 10, 11, 12). Three of these icons (8, 9, 10) have a family resemblance in that they are all squared off somewhat abruptly at the base, as if this type was created by chopping off the lower part of a full-length icon. They are also all connected, directly or indirectly, with the Cretan school.

One (8), which is now in Busovača, was formerly in Travnik (Fig. 145); both places are in Bosnia. It is dated 1620 and signed by Jovan Mangaf (Ἰωάννης Μαγγαφός), a well-known artist, whose family, Cretan by origin, had settled in Bosnia at Bugojno, where he was born<sup>25</sup>. Saint George is heavily armed. Besides a spear and sword, he has a helmet, bow and quiver of arrows. His cuirass is ornamented elegantly with a pattern which recalls those in current use in Cretan painting from the XVth century. The icon has a border, wide at the bottom and broken at the top right-hand corner by the segment from which Christ extends a crown. The legends on Saint George's scroll, which floats below his

<sup>23</sup> Ivanka Ribarević-Nikolić, "Žitijska ikona Sv. Dorda kefaloforosa iz Blagaja kod Mostara", *Saopštenje* 18, 1986, p. 239-244.

<sup>24</sup> A. Božkov, *B'lgarskata ikona*, n° 448, n° 455, n° 480.

<sup>25</sup> D. Mazalić, *art. cit.*, note 15, p. 58-59; *Ibidem*, *Slikarska umjetnost u B i H u tursko doba (1500-1878)*, Sarajevo 1965, p. 76-78; E. S. Ovečnikova, *art. cit.*, note 15, p. 166; Ivanka Ribarević-Nikolić, *art. cit.*, note 23, p. 239.



severed head, and on Christ's are the usual ones, written in Greek. Thus it seems that two distinctive ways of rendering the same iconographical type, one from Mount Athos and the other from Crete, meet in Bosnia.

With this icon (8) at Busovača may be associated one (9) formerly in the Lev Zubalov collection and now in the Historical Museum, Moscow (Fig. 151). Saint George is now less heavily armed, carrying only a spear and a sword<sup>29</sup>. However the execution of the Moscow icon (9) is far more refined. The border has been sedulously carried all round the composition; the spear is slender and the pattern on the cuirass more delicate. Ovcinnikova dated this icon to the XVth or XVIth century, which may be somewhat precocious. It has notable stylistic characteristics – the dark shading of the faces and hands, the use of gold or white striation as well as the sharp geometrical outlining<sup>27</sup>.

The icon (10) in the Sekulić collection, Belgrade, closely resembles the one in Moscow. However, the execution is not of the same high quality<sup>28</sup>. The border is not continued round the composition; the decoration of the cuirass is less delicate and there is no striation. The Sekulić family acquired the icon in Sarajevo. It could be a version of the Moscow icon (9), executed in Crete and exported to Bosnia. If this hypothesis is acceptable, the Moscow icon would have been painted around 1600 and the Sekulić icon (10) between that date and 1620, the date of Mangal's icon (8) (Fig. 145).

A copper-plate engraving (11), of which the block, made in 1701, has survived in the Serbian church at Pest in Hungary, copies faithfully

<sup>29</sup> E.S. Ovcinnikova, *art. cit.*, note 15; *Iskusstvo Vizantii sobraniyih SSSR*, Catalogue of exhibition 3, Moscow 1977, n° 979, p. 132-133; Irina Kyzlasova, *Russian Icons, XIVth-XVth centuries*, Moscow/Leningrad 1988, n° 104.

<sup>27</sup> For example the icons of Saint John and Saint Menas, published by Manolis Chatzidakis, *Icones de Saint-Georges des Grecs et la Collection de l'Institut de Venise*, Venice 1962, n° 54 and n° 55. *Vid.* also the icon of Saint John the Baptist in the Museo civico, Padua, P. Vokotopoulos, "Εἰκόνα Κρητικὴ εἰκόνα του 17ου αἰ.", *Αρχαία, Τριημερὴς τόμος για τον καθηγητὴ Μ. Ανδρόνικο*, Thessaloniki 1986, p. 133-135.

<sup>28</sup> S. Radović et al., *La collection d'icônes Sekulić*, Belgrade 1967, n° 68, p. 58; E.S. Ovcinnikova, *art. cit.*, note 15, p. 166; Ivanka Ribarević-Nikolić, *art. cit.*, note 23, p. 239.

another version of this type<sup>29</sup> (Fig. 316). There are slight differences in the detail from the three preceding icons (8, 9, 10). Blood drips from Saint George's severed head, and the letters O MN are inscribed on Christ's halo. While the portrait of Saint George is Cretan in style, the biographical scenes in roundels and the decoration in the border surrounding it betray the engraver's familiarity with contemporary trends in Austrian art. The scenes in the roundels recall those on the icon (6) at Blagaj, Hercegovina<sup>30</sup>. These are also in roundels, and, in both the icon and the engraving (11), the scene of the resuscitation of Glycerius's ox includes the unusual detail of Glycerius praying to an icon of Saint George. This was a period when distinguished engravers like Žefarović were also painters<sup>31</sup>. While there is an evident connection between the engraving (11) (Fig. 316) and the Blagaj icon (6), neither seems to be directly dependent on the other.

A further copper-plate engraving (12), of which the block is at Chilandar, Mount Athos, was made by the monk Parthenios from Elasson for the Athonite monastery of Iviron in 1779<sup>32</sup>. He has copied assiduously the Pest engraving (11), but his block was executed with less technical skill. He has omitted the Slavonic texts and most of the Greek ones apart from the legends on Christ's and Saint George's scrolls which are the traditional ones.

For the sake of completeness, the icon (13) attributed to Damaskinos, formerly in the collection of H. Stathatos and now in the Benaki Museum, should be included, although it belongs to a different iconographical tradition<sup>33</sup> (Fig. 146). Four warriors on horseback are represented below the enthroned Christ in heaven. There is only one common characteristic with the icons which have been described. Saints

<sup>29</sup> Sz. Vuicsics, *A pesti szerb templom*, Budapest 1961, p. 34; D. Davidov, *Srpska grafika XVIII. veka*, Novi Sad 1978, n° 117, p. 337; Ντόρη Παπασπάρτου, *Χάρτινες εἰκόνα, ορθόδοξα θρησκευτικὰ χαρακτικά, 1665-1899 I*, Athens 1986, n° 208, p. 203-204. Other copies of the engraving exist in the Louisa Lourda collection, Thessaloniki, and the Serbian patriarchate, Belgrade.

<sup>30</sup> *Vid. sup.*, note 23.

<sup>31</sup> Davidov, *op. cit.*, note 29, p. 105-109.

<sup>32</sup> Ντόρη Παπασπάρτου, *op. cit.*, note 29, n° 212.

<sup>33</sup> A. Xyngopoulos, *Συλλογὴ Εἰκόνων Ἀ. Σταθάτου*, Athens 1951, p. 4, plate 2; Manolis Chatzidakis, *op. cit.* note 17, n° 9, p. 204, figure 104.

George and Theodore Stratilates hold their severed heads in their left and right hands respectively. Xyngopoulos thought that Damaskinos painted the icon in Crete on his return from Venice in 1582 or 1584.

Some conclusions may be drawn from the examination of the published icons of Saint George "kephalophoros". The first iconographical type was a full-length portrait; it had been adapted from various representations of Saint John the Baptist. A dialogue between Christ and Saint George was composed and generally inscribed on their scrolls. The earliest dated example (2) is that at Xenophontos, painted by Antonios in 1545 (Fig. 159). There is no reason for supposing that any other of the icons published had been painted at an earlier date. Moreover the iconographical type of the earliest paintings did not derive from the school of Angelos. This full-length type was transmitted to Bosnia.

Soon after the Xenofontos painting (2), a variant (4) appears at Saint Paul's, dated 1552. On this icon the scrolls are omitted and Saint George is already crowned, while Cretan influence may be detected in the style. About seventy years later, bust portraits of Saint George appear. The earliest dated example (Fig. 145), that by Mangaf (8), was painted in Bosnia in 1620. However, this icon shows clear signs of Cretan influence. On two others which may be associated with it, as well as on later engravings, Saint George's scroll float. There are reasons, which will receive further consideration, for associating the Moscow example (9) with the aforementioned half-length icons.<sup>34</sup>

I have come across seven icons of Saint George "kephalophoros" which were hitherto unpublished. I intend now to present them and raise the question whether the examination of them may entail the modification of the foregoing conclusions.

The icon (15) in the Arkadi monastery in Crete, inventory n° 40, is large in size, 103 X 51centimetres<sup>35</sup> (Figs. 147 and 322). It was originally slightly wider, and it is severely damaged along the left-hand side. Paint

<sup>34</sup> *Vid. sup.*, note 27.

<sup>35</sup> It was subsequently republished in colour and dated to the XVIIth century. *Εἰκόνες τῆς Κρήτης Συλλογῆς*, edited by Manolis Chatzidakis, n° 128, p. 485, with a reference to the original version of this article.

is also missing in the area of Saint George's hands and severed head. It is a full-length portrait with the usual inscription on Christ's and Saint George's scrolls. The saint wears a blue tunic under his cuirass, fawn breeches and a red mantle. He is armed with a shield and spear. There are elaborate patterns on his cuff, shoe and roll. In the foreground there is a small lake with red banks. He stands on a dragon, which he is killing with his spear. This detail is rare on icons of him "kephalophoros", although standing warrior saints trampling a dragon are common on Cretan icons from the XVth century<sup>36</sup>. The morphology of the dragon with two heads is also unusual, although there is a similar mythical beast attacking Job portrayed in Patmos cod. 171, p. 51<sup>37</sup>. In the bottom right-hand corner there is a dedicatory inscription: ΔΕΗΧΗ ΤΩΝ ΔΟΥΛΩΝ ΚΟΥ ΕΜΜΑΝΟΥΗΛ ΚΑΙ ΤΖΟΠΙΤΖΑΚ. The painter has not signed the icon, which is, however, a work of high quality; its technique recalls the icon (9) in the Historical Museum, Moscow, mentioned above<sup>38</sup>. Moreover, for the upper part, the iconography is identical. Even more striking is the resemblance between the rendering of Christ in his segment on the two icons (9, 15). It may be conjectured plausibly that both icons were painted by the same artist.

On another icon (16), now in the Pushkin Museum, Moscow, Saint George "kephalophoros" is also portrayed standing on a dragon, although this time he is not killing it<sup>39</sup> (Fig. 152). In other respects the icon is conventional. Saint George, in military dress, is armed with a spear and shield. Christ crowns him. Both hold an unrolled scroll with the usual inscriptions.

<sup>36</sup> For example on icons of Saint George and Saint Phanourios on Patmos, M. Chatzidakis, *Icons of Patmos*, English edition, Athens 1985, n° 24 a.d n° 29, p. 75-76, 116-117; Maria Vassilakis-Mavarakakis, "Saint Phanourios: cult and iconography", *DChAH*, Series IV, Vol. 10, 1980-1981, p. 230, 255, figure 52b.

<sup>37</sup> G. Jacopi, "Le miniature dei codici di Patmo", *Clara Rhodos*, 6-7, III, 1932-1933, p. 51, figure XXVII.

<sup>38</sup> *Vid. sup.*, note 26.

<sup>39</sup> Chatzidakis, *op. cit.*, note 34, n. 89, p. 442-443, later published in *Post-Byzantine Painting. Icons of the XVth-XVIIth Centuries from the Collections of Moscow*, Exhibition catalogue, Pushkin Museum, 1991 and dated to the XVIIth century.



A half-length icon (16) recently acquired by the Benaki Museum, Athens, (Fig. 148) is about half the size of the Arkadi icon<sup>40</sup>. Saint George again wears a red mantle over his armour. It is marked with a rectangle in gold, recalling the primitive badge of nobility, a detail which recurs on half-length icons. Saint George is heavily armed, as on the Busovača icon, with a helmet, bow and quiver of icons. The usual dialogue is inscribed on the scrolls but there is no gold border. Laskarina Boura dated it plausibly towards the end of the XVIth century. It would have been painted earlier than the Busovača icon (8) (Fig. 145), with which it has more in common than the lighter armed Saint George on the Sekulić icon (10).

The half-length icon (18) of Saint George "kephalophoros" in the private collection of Mr and Mrs Paul Canellopoulos is yet smaller (Fig. 317). It is identical in all its details with the icon (9) in the Historical Museum, Moscow<sup>41</sup>. When it was displayed at the Institut français d'Athènes in 1968, it was dated to the end of the XVth century<sup>42</sup>. So early a dating raises difficulties. All the other half-length icons of Saint George "kephalophoros" can be plausibly grouped together about 1600. The iconography of this icon (18) is so close to that of the icon (9) in the Historical Museum, Moscow (Fig. 151), that one is surely dependent on the other. However, it is highly improbable that this iconographical type remained dormant for a century, when it was taken up and repeated a number of times. Moreover the full-length icons of Saint George "kephalophoros", which are surely earlier than the first half-length ones date only from 1545. For these reasons I reject the date proposed by Chrysanthi Baltoyanni for the Canellopoulos icon (18) (Fig. 317), which I associate with the other half-length icons painted around 1600.

Another icon (19) in the Benaki Museum, Athens, (Fig. 148) is signed by George Blastos (X[E]I[P ΓEΩPΓ[I]OY BAACTOY), a painter

whose work is found principally in the Cyclades (fl. 1642-1644)<sup>43</sup>. In many details the iconography is close to that of the Busovača icon (8) (Fig. 145) and the other icon (17) in the Benaki Museum. Saint George is heavily armed with a helmet, bow, spear and quiver of arrows (Fig. 148). The artist has made use of gold and white striation, although less delicately than on the icon in the Historical Museum, Moscow and on the Arkadi icon. The severed head is haloed and slightly larger than usual. There is the usual inscription on Saint George's floating scroll. However, the bust of Christ and his scroll are omitted. Instead a hand blessing emerges from the upper right-hand segment, while Saint George is already crowned. One other peculiarity should be mentioned: the angle of his spear is unusually abrupt with its shaft cut off at the edge of his mantle. Consequently we have here yet another variant of the half-length portrait. The same variant appears on an icon (20) which came up for sale at Sothebys, London<sup>44</sup> (Fig. 161). The main subject is a Deësis, with three half-length portraits below. Saint George is represented to the left. The inscription on his scroll cannot be deciphered on the photograph. Apart from this, the representation of him is so close to that on the Blastos icon, that the attribution of this icon to the same artist is plausible if conjectural. This would mean that the icon would be dated earlier than 1700, as proposed in the catalogue, preferably to the mid-XVIIth century, when Blastos is known to have been active.

The final icon (21) to be presented in this article was acquired by the Byzantine Museum in 1916<sup>45</sup> (Fig. 150). Saint George wears a blue tunic with brown sleeves, blue breeches with brown and vermilion stripes, brown shoes with ornamented buckles and a purple mantle. He holds in his left hand his severed head from which blood drips; it is haloed. His right hand is held out in a gesture of supplication, but, in the top right-hand corner, in the place where the bust of Christ is usually situated, there is only an inscription: ΟΡΩ ΣΕ ΜΑΡΤΥΣ Κ[Α]Ι ΣΤΕΦΩ ΘΗΝ ΣΗΝ ΚΑΡΑΝ. The saint's name is inscribed in the top left-hand corner.

<sup>40</sup> Inventory n° 29516. Laskarina Boura, *Ta Nea ton Filon*, Benaki Museum, October-December 1987, p. 33-34.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* *sup.*, note 27.

<sup>42</sup> Chrysanthi Baltoyanni, *Icones de collections privées en Grèce*, Catalogue of Exhibition, L'Institut Français, Athens, 1986, (The measurements given in the catalogue are incorrect.)

<sup>43</sup> Manolis Chatzidakis, *op. cit.*, note 17, Βλαστός Γεώργιος, p. 202-203, figure 25.

<sup>44</sup> *Catalogue of Sale, Icons, Russian Paintings and Works of Art*, Sothebys, London, November 14th, 1988, n° 452.

<sup>45</sup> Inventory n° T. 380, first published in this article.



What is quite exceptional is the background, executed in a personal perspective which recalls the style of Giorgione (1477-1510) and his school. The sky is white and pale blue with trees, buildings and a lake on which four swans are swimming. Angelos Bitzamanos used a similar technique of placing his figures against an Italianate background for Saint John the Baptist and Saint Jerome on the predella of a painting, dated 1518, in the Franciscan priory at Dubrovnik<sup>46</sup>. Also the word *kápa* for head instead of *κεφαλή* in the inscription, which was used in earlier inscriptions concerning the head of Saint John the Baptist, is not found on other representations of Saint George "kephalophoros". Abstracted from its background, however, the representation of Saint George closely resembles that on the painting (4) at Saint Paul's, dated 1552<sup>47</sup>. It is consequently a plausible hypothesis that this icon (21) could be the earliest surviving example of a representation of Saint George "kephalophoros"<sup>48</sup>. It is not easy to present a lucid and coherent account of the representations of Saint George "kephalophoros". One difficulty is that they were painted or engraved over a long period of time. Another is that they were executed over a wide area, possibly in Southern Italy, certainly on Mount Athos and in Bosnia. The families of artists travelled, probably originating in Crete, but sometimes settling particularly in Bosnia. However, while art produced in Crete has been studied coherently and often systematically, the same is not so true for that of the diaspora. Generally icons of Saint George "kephalophoros" were not signed, although the names of some painters are known, for example the monk Antonios (3, 4), Mangaf (8), Damaskinos (13) and Blastos (19). The identity of the painters of unsigned icons remains conjectural or unidentifiable. However, two painters are known named Emmanuel Lambardos. Νικόλαος, the uncle, is mentioned in documents from 1587

<sup>46</sup> Manolis Chatzidakis, "Les débuts de l'école crétoise et la question de l'école dite italo-grecque", *Μνημόσυνον Σοφίας Αντωνιάδη*, Venice 1974, p. 195-196, figure 261; *Ibidem* and Gordana Babić, "Ikone Balkanskog poluostrva i Grčkih ostrva", *Ikone*, edited by Snežana Pejaković, Belgrade 1981, p. 312, 326.

<sup>47</sup> *Ud. sup.* note 20.

<sup>48</sup> Ovcinnikova, *art. cit.*, note 15, advanced an ingenious hypothesis as to the archetype, a mosaic on the facade of the church of Saint George at Palermo, destroyed in 1769 but known from a drawing. Her hypothesis is far fetched, but plausible if the iconographical type did originate in Southern Italy.

to 1631; his nephew, Ηούρος, is mentioned from 1623 to 1644<sup>49</sup>. If one of them, as I would conjecture, was responsible for the creation of the half-length type of Saint George "kephalophoros", then the one (9) in the Historical Museum, Moscow, would be the work of the uncle, for it would have been painted earlier than the one (8) at Busovača by Mangaf, which is dated to 1620 (Fig. 145).

#### Numerical list of the paintings mentioned of Saint George

1. Biographical icon, dated 1574, Čajniče, Bosnia (Fig. 144).
2. Painting by Antonios, dated 1545, Catholicon of Xenophontos, Mount Athos (Fig. 313).
3. Triptych, anonymous, second half of XVth century, Collection of K. Levendis.
4. Icon of Deësis painted by Antonios, dated 1552, Chapel of Saint George, Saint Paul's, Mount Athos (Fig. 314).
5. Biographical icon, (date and painter ?), Struga, Macedonia.
6. Biographical icon, (early XVIIIth century, painter?), Blagaj, Hercegovina.
7. Portrait with Saint Demetrius, Zographou, Mount Athos (Fig. 318).
8. Portrait (dated 1620, (painter Jovan Mangaf), Busovača, Bosnia (Fig. 145).
9. Portrait (XVth or XVIth? Lambardos?), Historical Museum, Moscow (Fig. 151).
10. Portrait (before 1620? Painter ?), Sekulić collection, Belgrade.
11. Copper-plate engraving (block dated 1701), Serbian church, Pest (Fig. 316).
12. Copper-plate engraving (block dated 1779), Chilandar, Mount Athos.
13. Warriors on horseback (Damaskinos, date?), Benaki Museum, Athens (Fig. 146).

<sup>49</sup> Maria Kazandaki-Lappa, "Οι ζωγράφοι του Χάνδακα κατά το 17ο αιώνα. Εξήσχες από νοταριακά έγγραφα", *Θεσσαλονίκη* 18, 1981, p. 216-217, notes 36 and 37.

14. Bust portrait (dated 1620 and painted in Bosnia).
15. Icon, full-length, Arkadi, Crete (Figs. 147 and 322).
16. Icon, dedicatory inscription, Pushkin Museum, Moscow (Fig. 152).
17. Icon, half-length (end of XVth century), Benaki Museum, Athens (Fig. 148).
18. Icon, half-length (ca 1600), Canellopoulos collection, Athens (Fig. 317).
19. Icon, half-length (George Blastos, fl. 1642-1644), Benaki Museum, Athens (Fig. 148).
20. Deësis with half-portraits of saints (Blastos?), Sothebys, London (Fig. 315).
21. Icon, full-length (Southern Italy or Dubrovnik?), Byzantine Museum, Athens (Fig. 150).

### AN ICON OF SAINT ZOSIMOS OF SOZOPOL

In my search for representations of "kephalophoros" saints, I was lucky enough to discover what seems to be a unique icon of Saint Zosimos holding his severed head<sup>50</sup> (Fig. 153). It is in Sozopol, a town on the Black Sea coast of Bulgaria. A number of saints called Zosimos figure in Byzantine calendars. The best known is the monk who clothed and gave communion to Saint Mary the Egyptian<sup>51</sup>. The scene was frequently represented in wall-paintings in Byzantine churches. An early painting of this Zosimos appears on an icon at Mount Sinai, which Kurt Weitzmann dated to the first half of the Xth century<sup>52</sup> (Fig. 154). Another Zosimos was an animal tamer, a follower of Orpheus, whose fanciful legend was published by Fr. Halkin<sup>53</sup>. A third Zosimos, martyred in Pisidia, corresponds more closely to that on our icon<sup>54</sup>. A warrior from Apollonia, he renounced military service when he became a Christian. Arraigned before the emperor, he proclaimed himself publicly to be a Christian, refusing to sacrifice to Jupiter and Juno. Numerous attempts were made to suborn him, accompanied by various tortures. A voice from heaven encouraged him to be obdurate, and an angel intervened to heal his wounds. Ultimately he was beheaded.

That the subject of this icon is indeed Saint Zosimos of Apollonia is made clear by the entry in the *Sirmondianus* for June 19th, the reputed

<sup>50</sup> This article is a revised and augmented version of one published in the *Analecta Bollandiana* 119, June 2001.

<sup>51</sup> K. Kunze, "Zosimo, monaco in Palestina, santo", *Bibliotheca Sanctorum* 12, col. 1500.

<sup>52</sup> K. Weitzmann, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. The Icons, I, From the VIth to the Xth Century*, Princeton 1976, p. 83-85, B. 52, plate 108b.

<sup>53</sup> Fr. Halkin, "Un émule d'Orphée. La légende grecque inédite de saint Zosime, martyr d'Anazarbe en Cilicie", *Analecta Bollandiana* 70, 1952, p. 249-261 (= BHG 2476).

<sup>54</sup> K. Kunze, "Zosimo, santo martire in Pisidia", *Bibliotheca Sanctorum* 12, col. 1501.

day of his martyrdom: it took place under Trajan at Apollonia in Sozopolis<sup>55</sup>. Sozopolis was the name of the district in which Apollonia was situated, but in the inscription on the icon the names are reversed: Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ Ζ[Ω]ΣΙΜΟΣ ΕΝ ΣΩΖ[Ω]ΠΟΛΙΤΗΣΤΗΣ ΑΠΟΛΛΟΝΙΑΔΟΣ<sup>56</sup>. It is apparent that, by the time that the icon was painted, the town had taken the name of Sozopol. Consequently he is currently known as Saint Zosimos of Sozopol.

The full version of the inscription on the icon (in which I have not corrected the painter's spelling mistakes,) is as follows:

Αὐτὴ ἡ ὑκὼν ἐγένε-  
το διὰ συνδρομῆς  
καὶ ἐξόδων τῶν ρουφε-  
τίδων τουλκερίδων  
Μακαρίων καὶ ἄλλων  
βουλγαδῶν  
περπέριδων τοῦ  
φεκλγιδῶν εἰς  
μνημόσυνον αὐ-  
τῶν καὶ υἱὸς  
ζωὴν αἰώνιον  
εἰτε 1847 Ἰουλίους  
χρῶν δημητρίου [Σω]  
ζουπόλιτου

Before entering into detail about the iconography of Saint Zosimos, it would be as well to give some information about the *Sitz im Leben* of the icon<sup>57</sup>. The church of Saint Zosimos is situated outside the old city and close to the sea. It was built – or rather rebuilt – in 1857 on the site, according to oral tradition, of an older church also dedicated to the saint. Apollonia, being a port on the Black Sea, was of strategic importance to

<sup>55</sup> *Synaxarium ecclesiae constantinopolitanae*, col. 757.

<sup>56</sup> K. Paskaleva, *Ikoni ot Strandzandskija Kraj*, Sofia 1977, p. 9, n° 2. The inscription, of which Paskaleva gives only a part, is illegible on the photograph. I transcribed it when I saw the icon personally after the earlier version of this article had been published.

<sup>57</sup> For much of this information I am indebted to my Bulgarian colleague Dr Elka Bakalova.

the Byzantines, many of whom took refuge there after the Turkish conquest of Constantinople. Its links with Greek tradition have persisted. A Russian traveller who visited the city in 1829 reported that at that time there were as many as six Greek churches in the vicinity. Even today for some of the local population Greek is their mother tongue. As the inscription tells us, the artist who signed the icon in 1947 was called Demetrius of Sozopol, the town no longer being called Apollonia<sup>58</sup>. He was well-instructed in the tradition of Byzantine icon painting, but Italian influence may be detected particularly in the frames of the biographical scenes which surround the central portrait. It is yet more evident in his incomplete paintings on the church's iconostasis and in his triptych of the Deësis with saints in the church of Saint George also at Sozopol<sup>59</sup>.

The interpretation of the iconography of the icon is facilitated by referring to the so-called *Acts* of the martyr, which, presumably, Demetrius considered to be authentic<sup>60</sup>. Zosimos could have been martyred under the emperor Trajan in 111. For most incidents in a martyr's *Passion* there were standard iconographical types. However, it is with the central portrait that we are principally concerned. Saint Zosimos is represented in military uniform and a mantle. He holds a spear in his right hand and his severed head, which is haloed, in his left hand. In the top right hand corner there is a diminutive bust of Christ, while a diminutive angel in the top left hand corner extends a crown towards the martyr.

The artist Demetrius obviously had a model for this portrait of Saint Zosimos "kephalophoros". There might have been a similar portrait of the martyr in the ruined church; if so, it has not survived. Moreover no other representation of Saint Zosimos is known to me.

With one exception, warrior saints were not normally represented "kephalophoros". This exception was Saint George. I have included in

<sup>58</sup> Paskaleva, *op. cit.*, note 56.

<sup>59</sup> Paskaleva, *ibidem*, reproduces his painting of Saint John the Baptist on the iconostasis, n° 7: *vid.* also A. Vassiliev, *Peintres bulgares de la Renaissance*, Sofia 1965, p. 651.

<sup>60</sup> *De S. Zosimo milite in Pisida. Commentarius praeuius* (auct. G. Henschenio) and *Acta Martyrii* (= BHG 1888), *Acta Sanctorum*, Iunii, III, Antwerp 1702, p. 8. I thank the Bollandist Xavier Lequeux for providing me with this reference.



this volume a revised version of an article on Saint George "kephalophoros"<sup>61</sup>, enumerating about twenty examples of him represented thus. One of these<sup>62</sup> in the Bulgarian monastery of Zographou on Mount Athos could have been known to Demetrius (Fig. 318). Such an explanation, if conjectural, has at least the merit of plausibility.

### SAINT JOHN VLADIMIR "KEPHALOPHOROS"

In memory of my late colleague and friend Doula Mouriki, I published two articles, both in a *Festschrift* dedicated to her<sup>63</sup>. They were both concerned with the same icon, measuring 23.2 X 17.0 centimetres, which, unusually, is made up of two separate and quite unrelated scenes (Fig. 319). V. Benešević published the icon inadequately eighty years ago, accompanied by a murky photograph<sup>64</sup>. Subsequently, only a few Slav scholars have displayed interest in the icon which they knew uniquely from Benešević's reproduction<sup>65</sup>. From the inscriptions legible on this reproduction, we learn that the icon was painted at Sinai in 1781 and commissioned by a certain Anastasius in thanksgiving for his cure from dysuria with the hope of pardon for his sins.

<sup>61</sup> *Vid.* two articles earlier.

<sup>62</sup> N° 7 in the article on Saint George.

<sup>63</sup> Ch. Walter, "A Little Known Typological Representation of the Monastery at Sinai", *DChAH*, Series IV, Vol. 17, 1993-1994, p. 359-362; *Idem*, Icon of Saint John Vladimir at Mount Sinai", *ΛΑΜΠΗΛΩΝ*, *Αφιέρωμα στη μνήμη της Ντούλας Μουρίκι* II, Athens 2003, p. 889-900.

<sup>64</sup> V. Benešević, *Monumenta sinaitica archaeologica et palaeographica* I, Petropolis 1925.

<sup>65</sup> Especially George Ostrogorsky, "Sinajska ikona sv. Jovana Vladimira", *Vizantija i Sloveni*, Belgrade 1970 (reprinted from *Glasnik škopskog naučnog društva* 14, 1934, p. 99-106); Z. Dilevski, "Izobraženia na Ivan Vladimir Elbasanski v b'lgarskata ikonografija i tehnik istoričeski i ikonografski iztočnici", *Izvestija na Instituta za Izbrazitelni Izkustva* 3, 1960, p. 197, figure 5; C. Grozdanov, *Portreti ne voevatelice od Makedonija od IX-XVII vek*, Skopje 1983, p. 211-212, figure 66.

The upper picture, a typological representation of Saint Catherine, was treated in my first article. Only the inscriptions on it interest us here, because the lower part, studied in my second article, is our principal concern. I was fortunate in obtaining far better photographs of the icon than that of Benešević, taken after at least a rudimentary cleaning by the Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria expedition<sup>66</sup>. On these photographs, the inscriptions on the lower picture can be read clearly (Figs. 320-321). Above the figure of John Vladimir: Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ Ο ΩΑΝΝΗΣ ΑΝΑΘ ΒΛΑΔΙΜΙΡΟΣ (Saint John Lord Vladimir). Beside the diminutive scene to the right of the horse: ΧΕΙΡ CΥΤΤΕΝΟΥC ΤΕΜΝΕΙ CΕ Η ΜΙΑΙΦΟΝΟC. ΧΕΙΡ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ ΝΕΜΕΙ CΟΙ ΑΞΙΩC CΤΕΦΟC (The hand of a relative cuts you down, the murderess. The hand of the Lord worthily allots you a crown). Beside the diminutive scene to the left of the horse: ΤΜΙΘΙC ΚΕΦΑΛΕΙΝ ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΛΟΙΠΟΝ ΩC ΜΕΓΑ ΑΡΑC ΓΑΡ ΑΥΤΗΝ ΕΙC ΕΥΚΤΗΡΙΟΝ ΤΡΕΧΕΙC (You took your severed head and the rest. You ran to the sanctuary). The fourth legend is placed below the horse: ΧΕΙΡ ΗΝ ΖΩΓΡΑΦΟΥ ΚΟΡΝΑΡΟΥ ΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΚΡΗΤΟC (The hand of the painter was of John Cornaros of Crete)<sup>67</sup>.

Although John Vladimir was certainly a historical personage, little that is certain is known about him. He would have been ruler of the region known as Dioclea or Zeta (roughly corresponding to the south of contemporary Montenegro and the north of contemporary Albania) from before 998 to his death at the hands of Ivan Vladislav, who had already murdered Gabriel Radomir, son and successor of Tsar Samuel of Bulgaria, together with Gabriel's wife<sup>68</sup>. The date of his death, taken to be May 22nd, 1016, is not absolutely certain. The *Chronicle* of Skylitzes, written some eighty years later, is the earliest witness<sup>69</sup>.

<sup>66</sup> The late Kurt Weitzmann personally authorized me to publish this photograph. I gratefully acknowledge the courtesy of the Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria Expedition in confirming this permission.

<sup>67</sup> For the painter John Cornaros, *vid.* Manolis Chatzidakis, *Ελληνες Ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση*, Athens 1987, p. 110-113.

<sup>68</sup> George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, Oxford 1968, p. 310.

<sup>69</sup> Ioannis Scylitzes *synopsis historiarii*, edited by H. Thurn, Berlin 1973, § 38, p. 353-354 = George Cedrenus, *Historiarum compendia* II, Bonn 1839, p. 463.



The fullest medieval account of Vladimir is in the *Chronicle of the so-called Priest of Dioclea* (Pope Dukljanin)<sup>70</sup>. This text, which probably dates from the XIVth century, extols the saintly character of John Vladimir and gives a circumstantial account of the ambush prepared for him by Vladislav on his way to Prespa. When the ambush failed, Vladislav, at dinner, sent gladiators who beheaded him. Many prodigies were attributed to his relics. Legends about him spread to the West, but his cult seems to have remained local for several centuries<sup>71</sup>. At some time John Vladimir's relics would have been transferred to a monastery dedicated to him (Šin Jon to the Albanians) ten miles north-west of Elbasan (Νέον Κάστρον). This was restored by the Albanian ruler Karlo Topija about 1380 after damage from an earthquake. The shrine was restored again in the XIXth century but destroyed again by fire, apparently, in 1940<sup>72</sup>.

The frontiers of this region have been modified frequently during the centuries. However, it would seem that, at the period when Saint John Vladimir's cult expanded, that is to say at the end of the XVIIth century, there were flourishing Greek communities at Ohrid, Vokopojia (Μοσχόπολις), Durrës (Δυρράχιον) and communications were not difficult with Belgrade, Venice and Vienna. So far as the cult of John Vladimir is concerned, two bishops were more particularly instrumental in spreading it.

The first was Kosmas (Κοσμάς Μαυροῦδης), 1643-1702, one time metropolitan of Kition in Cyprus<sup>73</sup>. He stood in for the archbishop of Ohrid during an illness, was hegumen of the monastery of Šin Jon, and

<sup>70</sup> There are several editions: F. Šišić, *Letopis popa Dukljanina*, Belgrade / Zagreb 1938; V. Molin, *Letopis popa Dukljanina*, Zagreb 1950; N. Banašević, *Letopis popa dukljanina i narodna predanja*, Belgrade 1971; S. Mijušković, *Letopis popa Dukljanina*, Belgrade 1988. S. Hafner's *Studien zur altserbischen dynastischen Historiographie*, Munich 1964, in which he draws a parallel between Stefan (Symeon) Nemanja and John Vladimir 'cited by D. Popović, *Srpskivladarskigrob u srednjem veku*, Belgrade 1992, p. 21) has not been available to me.

<sup>71</sup> L. Pavlović, *Kulturni lica kod Srba i Makedonaca*, Smederevo 1965, p. 40.

<sup>72</sup> J. Köder & E. Trapp, "Bericht über eine Reise nach Südalbanien", *JÖBG* 15, 1966, p. 392.

<sup>73</sup> J. Norret, "Deux avatars du panégyrique de S. Georges par Arcadius de Chypre", *Analecta Bollandiana* 92, 1974, p. 168, note 2.

ended his ecclesiastical career as metropolitan of Durrës. Doubtless Kosmas drafted the *Akolouthia* for John Vladimir, together with a brief biography. Both were published, thanks to John Papa from Elbasan in Venice in 1690<sup>74</sup>. In this publication may be found both the earliest hagiographical account of Saint John Vladimir and the earliest examples of his iconography (figs. 325-326).

The second bishop to promote the cult of the saint was Joasaph, archbishop of Ohrid, 1719-1745<sup>75</sup>. He was responsible for the publication at Vokopojia in 1742 of a series of *Akolouthia* for saints who were venerated locally: the Fifteen Martyrs of Strumica, Erasmus of Ohrid, Naum, Nicodemus of Berat (Βελλάγραδα), the Seven Saints and John Vladimir<sup>76</sup>. At the same time, artists were commissioned to paint portraits or biographical cycles of saints. Among them may be noted an icon of John Vladimir, formerly at Lushnjë, Albania and painted in 1731<sup>77</sup> (Fig. 327).

Although the population of the archdiocese of Ohrid was certainly varied in its ethnic origins, as were doubtless also the saints whose cult was promoted there, the religious culture, just as the initiative in

<sup>74</sup> *Ακολουθία τοῦ ἐνδόξου βασιλέως καὶ μεγαλομάρτυρος Ἰωάννου τοῦ Βλαδιμήρου καὶ θαυματουργοῦ*, Venice 1690; E. Legrand, *Bibliographie hellénique ... des ouvrages publiés par les Grecs au dix-septième siècle*, Paris 1894, n° 637, p. 479-492; L. Petit, *Bibliographie des acolouthies grecques*, Brussels 1926, p. 121-122 (BHG 2195). L. Tapkova-Zaimova found a fragment of the *Life of John Vladimir* written in Greek in a manuscript of the Lenin Library, Moscow, n° 167 (820), "Un manuscrit inconnu de la Vie de St Jean-Vladimir", *Études Balkaniques* 6, 1967, p. 179-188. However, since it is not possible to date this manuscript securely, it can hardly be used as evidence in favour of the *Life* having existed earlier than 1690.

<sup>75</sup> Grozdanov, *Portreti*, op. cit., note 65, p. 201.

<sup>76</sup> *Ακολουθία τοῦ Κλημεντος Αρχιεπισκόπου Αχρίδων ... Moschopolis (Vokopojia)*, 1742; E. Legrand, *Bibliothèque hellénique ... des ouvrages publiés par les Grecs au dix-huitième siècle*, Paris 1919, p. 284-290; L. Petit, op. cit., note 74, p. 43.

<sup>77</sup> Grozdanov, *Portreti*, op. cit., note 65, p. 212; figure 72. The photograph is cropped. Grozdanov wrote (1983) that the icon's present owner is unknown; he also attributed it to Konstantin Zograf. Actually the icon was exhibited in Paris in 1974. Catalogue, *L'art albanais à travers les siècles*, n° 31, but attributed to Konstantin Shpataraku. Its provenance was given as the church of the monastery of Ardenice, Lushnjë.

promoting cult, was Greek. This was particularly the case with John Vladimir, whose *Akolouthia* was republished in Venice in 1774 and 1858<sup>78</sup>. Nicodemus Hagioritis also included the saint's *Life* in his collection. It clearly derives from the recital of John Vladimir's martyrdom in the *Akolouthia*<sup>79</sup>. Yet only in 1802 was a first Serbian translation published in Venice, and only in 1861 was his commemoration included in the *Srbljak* (the collection of commemorations peculiar to the Serbian Church)<sup>80</sup>. However, meanwhile Saint John Vladimir, along with other saints venerated in the archdiocese of Ohrid, had become better known by the engravings of Žefarović, notably those published in his *Stematografija* in 1742, and fortunately reproduced, since the original is now lost<sup>81</sup> (Figs. 323-324).

One model certainly exploited in the composition of the *Life* of John Vladimir in the *Akolouthia* of 1690 was the *Panegyric* of Saint George by the VIIIth-century bishop Arcadius of Constantia, Cyprus<sup>82</sup>. This adds verisimilitude to the theory that Kosmas of Chiton wrote the *Life* of the saint. It belongs to the same literary genre as the *Panegyric*, from which, occasionally, he lifted entire phrases. If he was also familiar with Pope Dukljanin's *Chronicle*, he differs in his presentation of John Vladimir's wife. Far from being a model of all the virtues, she became rather a second Delilah (or Salome), inciting Ivan Vladislav to murder her husband. Various incidents, such as John Vladimir's vision of a cross held by an eagle (which recalls New Constantines) were first recounted in the text of 1690. The incident which most concerns us here is the prodigy of John Vladimir picking up his severed head and carrying it on horseback to the shrine where he wished to be buried. Thus he became a "kephalophoros" saint. On the Sinai icon, the subject of this article, the diminutive scene on the left portrays him carrying his head to the shrine

<sup>78</sup> L. Pavlović, *Kultovi lice*, op. cit., note 71, p. 35.

<sup>79</sup> Nicodemus Hagioritis, *Συναγωγὴ* 2, Athens 1868, p. 166.

<sup>80</sup> Pavlović, *Kultovi lice*, p. 75.

<sup>81</sup> C. Grozdanov, *Portreti*, op. cit., note 65, figures 84-87; Catalogue, *L'art albanais*, n° 408.

<sup>82</sup> BHG 684; Noret, art. cit., note 73.

(Fig. 321). This was a theme of Western rather Eastern hagiography, the more so because the saint has only one head which he is carrying.<sup>83</sup>

On the other hand in Isabella Piccini's portrait (Fig. 326) of John Vladimir, illustrating the *Akolouthia* of 1690 she has followed Byzantine tradition, for the saint has two heads, one with a crown on his head and the other haloed in his left hand. The similar portrait in his shrine at Elbasan is lost, but it is said to have inspired an XVIIIth-century book cover (Figs. 330-331) whose provenance is given as the shrine in question<sup>84</sup>. The formula differs slightly in the portrait (Fig. 323) in Žefarović's *Stematografija* of 1742. Here John Vladimir holds his severed head at arm's length. The gesture recalls Salome holding the head of Saint John the Baptist in a XIIIth century miniature (Fig. 329) in the lost Prizren *Tetraevangelion* which was in the Belgrade National Library, codex 299 until its destruction<sup>85</sup>. The earliest known biographical icon at Lushnjë (Fig. 327), dated 1731, has been mentioned. It is likely that Žefarović was familiar with it and borrowed from it for his engraving of 1742, now only known from copies<sup>86</sup> (Fig. 323). One was made on Mount Athos in 1868. Versions of it are extant in the monasteries of Chilandar and Dionysios<sup>87</sup>. The close connection of Žefarović's engraving with the archdiocese of Ohrid is made yet more evident by the legends on it. Made under the patronage of archbishop Joasaph, it was paid for by two citizens (both Greek) of Voskopoja, Adamis Argentis and Theodoros Papageorgiou.

<sup>83</sup> *Id. sup.*, Biblical and Early Medieval Tradition, note 12.

<sup>84</sup> *Id. sup.* Grozdanov, *Portreti*, op. cit., note 77; Catalogue, *L'art albanais*, n° 408.

<sup>85</sup> Ch. Walter, "Salome and the Head of Saint John the Baptist", *Revue des études arméniennes* 23, 1992; reprinted, *Pictures as Language*, p. 382, figure 5.

<sup>86</sup> D. Davidov, *Srpska grafika XVIII. veka*, Novi Sad 1978, n° 32, figure 34-35 (after a photograph in a private collection in Vienna, now lost). Reproduced after Davidov, D. Papastratos, *Paper Icons, Greek Orthodox Religious Engravings 1665-1889*, Athens 1990, n° 263, p. 243-244.

<sup>87</sup> Papastratos, *ibidem*. The author includes an important documentation, p. 242, figures 1-5 (figures 3 and 5 should be interchanged), plates 262-267. Presumably the Venetian cliché (now at Hilandar), plate 264, was used for the 1774 edition of the *Akolouthia*. It follows the iconography of Žefarović's *Stematografija*. However, the iconography of John Vladimir lying in state is that of the engraving in the 1690 edition.



Žefarović himself was of Slav origin as his name clearly indicates. He was born on the shore of Lake Dojran (Δοϊράνη) at the end of the XVIIth century.<sup>88</sup> His original project was to become a monk, but he abandoned this in order to become a painter. He moved north, probably learning the art of engraving in Belgrade which was then under Austrian rule. He lived in Belgrade from 1718 to 1739. Then the Serbian patriarch Arsenije IV Jovanović-Šakabenda sent him to Vienna, where he worked with the engraver Toma Mesmer. He accepted commissions indifferently from both Greeks and Slavs. The legends on his biographical engraving of John Vladimir are in both Greek and Slavonic. However, Žefarović was above all responsible for promoting the cult of John Vladimir among Slav peoples.

The legends which accompany the biographical scenes on Žefarović's engraving are illegible on the surviving photograph. Fortunately this is not the case for the XIXth-century copy<sup>89</sup> (Fig. 323). There are twelve scenes: Vladimir's birth, his coronation, his vision of an eagle holding a cross, venerating the cross, the unsuccessful ambush (?), his murder by his brother-in-law, riding in procession with his severed head, his arrival at his shrine (?), the Franks stealing his relics, the relics are recovered. Below the central portrait, he is represented lying in state (Fig. 324). There are also views of the cities of Voskopoja, Elbasan and Berat. Above his portrait, the members of the Trinity are represented. The engraving cannot have had much in common with the Sinai icon (Figs. 319-320). On this, as Ostrogorsky pointed out long ago, the legends are close to texts in the *Akolouthia*.<sup>90</sup> The reference to John Vladimir's murder by his wife is understood literally in the iconography. The diminutive scene is in the lower right hand corner of the picture. John Vladimir's ride to his sanctuary is also represented in the lower right hand corner (Fig. 321). As in Western tradition, he has only the one head which he holds in his hand. However Western martyrs do not carry their head on horseback. A possible analogy in Byzantine art is a detail of an icon attributed to Damaskinos, in which Saint George is represented on

<sup>88</sup> Davidov, *ibidem*, note 86, p. 105-109; O. Mikić *et al.*, *Delo Xristofora Žefarovića*, Novi Sad 1961.

<sup>89</sup> Papastratos, *Paper Icons*, n° 265.

<sup>90</sup> Ostrogorsky, "Sinajska ikona", *art. cit.*, note 65, p. 163, 165-166.

horseback carrying his severed head<sup>91</sup> (Fig. 146). However, as he also has a head on his shoulders, the severed head in his hand is a trophy.

In conclusion, it seems that the representation of Saint John Vladimir "kephalophoros" on the Sinai icon is a *hapax*. Not only are there no earlier examples of this iconography but also it was not imitated by later artists. Probably their models, for example Serbian engravings of Vladimir and prince Lazar<sup>92</sup> (Figs. 328 and 332), copied those which illustrated the *Akolouthia* or the *Stematografija*.

<sup>91</sup> The whole icon is reproduced, with bibliography, in the article "Saint George 'kephalophoros'", republished in this volume.

<sup>92</sup> Dejan Melaković, "Kult kneza Lazara u srpskom baroku", *O knezu Lazaru. Naučni Skup u Kruševcu 1971*, Belgrade 1975, p. 321-325.

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Marble, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome.



12. Colossal head of Constantine. Side view.  
Marble, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome.



13. Constantine Leaving Milan and medallion with Sol invictus.  
The Arch of Constantine, Rome, 315 A.D.



14. Constantine entering Rome and Mosaic medallion. The Arch of Constantine, Rome, 315 A.D.



15. Mosaic of the ceiling of the oculus under the Cathedral of Trier.





16. Woman with kantharos, Panel from the oecus under the Cathedral of Trier, Bischöfliches Museum, Trier.



17. Woman with mirror, Panel from the oecus under the Cathedral of Trier, Bischöfliches Museum, Trier.



18. Woman with jewellery box from the oecus under the Cathedral of Trier, Bischöfliches Museum, Trier.



19. Woman with lyre, Putti, Ceiling panels from the oecus under the Cathedral of Trier. Reconstruction.



20. Medallion of two solidi with Helena Augusta. Pavia, 324 A.D.  
Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Médailles, Paris.



21. Solidus with Fausta Augusta, wife of Constantine the Great. Trier, 324 A.D. Private collection.



23. Christ as Sol Invictus. Mosaic in Tomb of the Julii, Vatican.



22. Sol Invictus in chariot. Roman mosaic. Rhenisches Landesmuseum, Bonn.





25. *Adventus* of Constantine at Milan. Ticinum, 313 A.D. Reverse of Fig. 24. Cabinet des Médailles, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



24. Medallion with Constantine and Sol invictus. Ticinum, 313 A.D. Cabinet des Médailles, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



26. Constantine and Sol invictus. Solidus. Pavia, 316 A.D. British Museum, London.



27. *Adventus* of Constantine at London. Nummus. London, 310-312 A.D. British Museum, London.



28. *Adventus* of Constantine I at London. Medallion of ten aurei. Trier 297. Reverse of Fig. 198. Musée d'Arras.



29. Christogram-topped labarum. Follis. Constantinople, ca. 327. Reverse of Fig. 202. British Museum, London.



30. Apothecios of Julian the Apostate or Symmachus. Ivory, British





24. Medallion with Constantine and Sol invictus. Ticinum, 313 A.D.  
Cabinet des Médailles, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



25. *Adventus of Constantine at Milan*. Ticinum, 313 A.D. Reverse of Fig. 24.  
Cabinet des Médailles, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



26. Constantine and Sol invictus. Solidus.  
Pavia, 316 A.D. British Museum, London.



27. *Adventus of Constantine at London*. Nummus.  
London, 310-312 A.D. British Museum, London.



28. *Adventus of Constantine I at London*. Medallion of  
ten aurei. Trier 297. Reverse of Fig. 198. Musée d'Arras.



29. Christogram-topped labarum. Follis. Constantinople,  
ca. 327. Reverse of Fig. 202. British Museum, London.



30. Apothecios of Julian the Apostate  
or Symmachus. Ivory, British  
Museum, London.



31. Medallion with Constantine crowned with his sons. Constantinople, 324 A.D. Reverse of Fig. 201. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.



32. Constantine and his wife Fausta. Cameo, Geld en Bankmuseum, Utrecht.



33. Constantine with right arm raised, Coin set in pendant, obverse, British Museum, London



34. Crispus and Constantine Caesars, Coin set in pendant, reverse, British Museum, London.



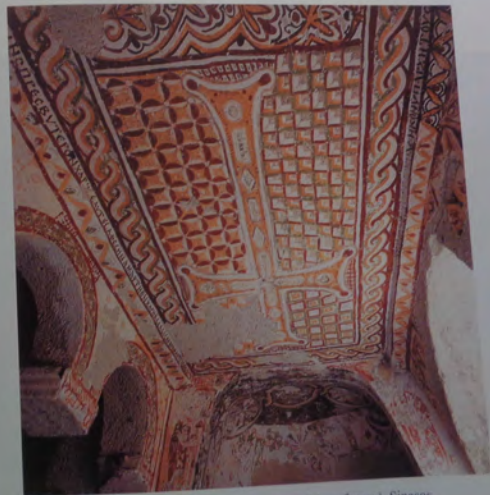
35. Constantine presenting the city to the Virgin. Mosaic in St. Sophia, Istanbul.



36. Constantinian counterpoise weights. Staatliche Museen, Berlin



37. Apse. Painting. Güllü Dere n° 5.



38. Cross. Painting. Hagios Basilios (Mustafapasa), Sinasos.





39. *Constantine and Helena upholding a framed cross. Painting, Yılanlı kilise, Yesilköy (Ihlara).*



42. *St. Helena Orans. Painting, Tokali kilise II (Göreme n° 7).*



40. *Constantine and Helena holding a two-barred cross in a series of saints. Painting, Tokali kilise I (Göreme n° 7).*



41. *Constantine holding a standard and a globe, each surmounted by a cross; Painting, Tokali kilise II (Göreme n° 7).*



44. Constantine and Helena holding a two barred cross. Painting.  
St. Catherine (Göreme 21).



43. Constantine, Saklı kilise, Göreme 2a. Detail of Fig. 221.



45. Constantine and Helena. Painting. Göreme n° 1, El Nazar.



46. Constantine and Helena holding two barred cross with acronym. Painting, Karsı kilise.





47. a. *Constantine's dream*; b. *Constantine's vision before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge*; c. *the finding of the True Cross*. Miniature, Paris græc. 510, f. 440, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



48. *The Dream of Constantine*. Chapel of St. Sylvester, 1243-1254 A.D., Quattro Coronati, Rome.



49. *St. Sylvester showing to Constantine the images of Sts. Peter and Paul*. Chapel of St. Sylvester, 1243-1254 A.D., Quattro Coronati, Rome.





50. Constantine's baptism by Sylvester. Chapel of St. Sylvester, 1243-1254 A.D., Quattro Coronati.



52. Constantine as Sylvester's strator. Painting. Chapel of St. Sylvester, 1243-1254 A.D., Church of the Quattro Coronati, Rome.



51. Constantine borrowing the legion on Sylvester. Painting. Chapel of St. Sylvester, 1243-1254 A.D., Church of the Quattro Coronati, Rome.



53. The finding the True Cross. Painting. Chapel of St. Sylvester, 1243-1254 A.D., Church of the Quattro Coronati, Rome.



54. The Invention of the Cross, Church of the Holy Cross of Agiasmata, Platanistasa, Cyprus.



56. The Vision of Constantine, Church of the Holy Cross of Agiasmata, Platanistasa, Cyprus.



55. The Exaltation of the Cross with Heraclius, Church of the Holy Cross of Agiasmata, Platanistasa.



57. Constantine's Triumphal Entry into Rome, Church of the Holy Cross of Agiasmata, Platanistasa.





58. Constantine on horseback. Miniature, Chudov Psalter, Moscow, Historical Museum, grace, 129 D, f. 58v.



59. Constantine and Helena, detail from the Khakuli Triptych, Tbilisi.



60. Reliquary with Constantine and Helena. Silver gilt, Hermitage.



61. Sliding cover with Crucifixion of the Reliquary Fig. 60.





59. Constantine and Helena, detail from the Khakuli Triptych. Tbilisi.



62. Jaucourt reliquary with Constantine and Helena. Silver gilt. Louvre, Paris.



63. Ivory Triptych with Crucifixion. Staatliche Museen, Berlin.



65. The Cross of Adrianople. Benaki Museum, Athens.

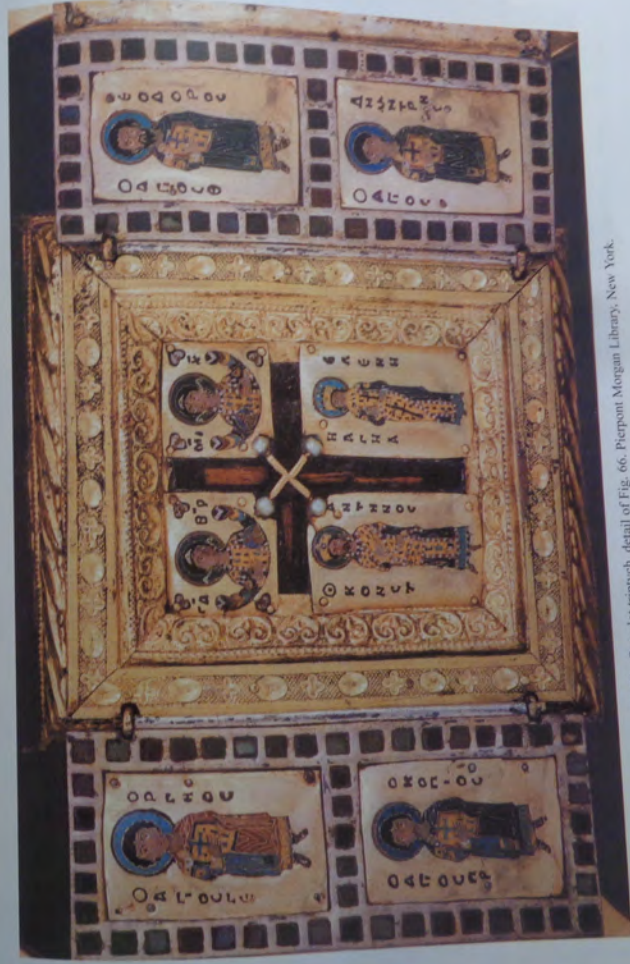


64. Constantine and Helena; detail of Fig. 63. Staatliche Museen, Berlin.





66. The Savelot triptych, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.



67. The Savelot triptych, detail of Fig. 66. Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.





70. Icomoclast synod of 815. Miniature, Panticorator 61, f. 16.



71. Icomoclast synod of 815. Miniature, Chludov Psalter, f. 23v, Moscow.



73. The First Council of Constantinople. Cod. Par. graec. 510, f. 355.



ἡ γὰρ ἐκείνη ἡμετέρα ἐστὶν τοῦ μεγάλου καὶ ἁγίου πατρὸς ὁ ὁδὸς ὁ δὲ ἡμετέρα ἐστὶν ἡ ἐκείνη

74. The First Council of Nicaea with Constantine presiding. Miniature. Cod. Vat. graec. 1613, p. 108.



72. Ikonoclast synod of 815. Miniature, Palter Barberini graec. 372, f. 43v.



75. The Holy Fathers, Lectionary, Mount Athos, Dionysiou 587, fol. 126.





76. First Council of Nicaea. Icon by Damaskinos. Herakleion.



77. First Council of Nicaea. Proskynesis icon. Athos, Koutloumous.



78. Constantine and Helena, Painting. Holy Apostles, Pec, ca. 1300.



79. Constantine and Helena with St. Sava, Painting. Gracanica, ca. 1320.





80. Constantine and Helena, Painting, Berende, Bulgaria.



83. Constantine and Helena, Agios Stefanos, Kastoria.



81. Constantine and Helena, Painting, St. George in the Monastery of Kremikovci, Bulgaria.



82. Constantine and Helena, Painting, Agios Anargyros, Kastoria.



85. Coronation by Angels of the despot Stefan Lazarević.



86. Constantine and Helena, Painting, St. Athanasius, Kastoria.



84. Constantine and Helena, Mosaic, Hosios Loukas.



87. John Tzimiskes followed by Magister Melias, Painting, Pigeon House, Cavusin.



88. Hetoimasia. Mosaic, Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome.



86. Constantine and Helena, Painting, St. Athanasius, Kastoria.



87. John Tzimiskes followed by Magister Melias, Painting, Pigeon House, Cavusin.







89. Christ sending angels to crown Milutin and Simonida. Painting, Gracanica.



90. Simonida crowned by an angel. Painting, Gracanica.



91. Milutin crowned by an angel. Painting, Gracanica.



92. Constantine and Helena. Painting, Mileševa.



94. Despot Stefan Uroš Nemanja as donor and Simonida. Painting, Kraljeva crkva, Studenica.



Emperor Vladimir holding model of the church, Radostin and Stephen the First Crowned. Mileševa.



95. Sava and Symeon Nemanja. Painting, Kraljeva crkva, Studenica.





96. Despot Stefan Uroš Nemanja, detail of Fig. 94, Studenica.



97. Sava, Archbishop of Serbia, detail of Fig. 95, Kraljeva crkva, Studenica.



98. Tsar Ivan Alexander (1331-1371), Ossuary church at Backovo.



99. Ivan Alexander and his family, Add. 38627, f. 3, British Library.





100. The Birth of Constantine the Great. Church of St. George and Sts. Constantine and Helena, Pyrgos, Monofatsi, Crete, 1315 A.D.



102. Triumphal Entry of Constantine into Rome. Church of St. George and Sts. Constantine and Helena, Pyrgos, Monofatsi, Crete, 1315 A.D.



101. Constantine is being taken by his mother to Constantine Chlorus. Church of St. George and Sts. Constantine and Helena, Pyrgos, Monofatsi, Crete, 1315 A.D.



103. Christ Crowning Constantine and Helena. Church of St. George and Sts. Constantine and Helena, Pyrgos, Monofatsi, Crete, 1315 A.D.



104. The Triumph of Constantine. Church of St. Constantine, Kritsa, Merabello, Crete, 1354/55 A.D.



The Baptism of Constantine. Church of St. Constantine, Kritsa, Merabello, Crete, 1354/55 A.D.



106. The Invention of the Cross. Church of St. Constantine, Kritsa, Merabello, Crete, 1354/55 A.D.



107. Exaltation of the Cross. Miniature, Vatican graec. 1613, p.35.





The Triumph of Constantine. Chapter 1. 25





108. Helena interrogating Cyriacus, Church of the Theotokos,



109. The Invention of the Cross, Church of the Theotokos, Spina, Kantanos, Chania.



110. Exaltation of the Cross, St. George, Ano Viannos, Viannos, Herakleion, Crete, 1401 A.D.



111. Exaltation of the Cross, Saint Paraskevi, Arkadi, Rethymon, ca. 1400 A.D.



113. Ambo. Painting. St. Sozomenus, Galata, Cyprus, Reading of the Synodikon of Orthodoxy.



112. Ambo. Reading of the Synodikon of Orthodoxy; Lectorium, Athos Dionysiou 587, f. 43.



114. The Last Judgement, detail. Mosaic, Cathedral of Torcello.





115. Hetoimasia, Torcello, detail from Fig. 114.



116. Hetoimasia and military saints. Steatite, Louvre, Paris.



117. Constantine on horseback. St. Constantine, Dymiskos, Rethymon.



118. Constantine enthroned. St. Constantine, Avbou, Herakleion.





117. Constantine on horseback. St. Constantine, Drymiskos, Rethymnon.



119. Christ, Constantine and Helena with scenes from their life. Icon in the Church of St. Constantine, Agios Konstantinos, Rethymno, 1732 A.D.



120. Constantine and Helena surrounded by ten scenes from their life. Detail of Fig. 119.





122. The rout of the army of Maxentius. Detail of Fig. 120.



121. Constantine marching towards the Milvian Bridge. Detail of Fig. 120.



123. The Dream of Constantine. Detail of Fig. 120.



124. The Baptism of Constantine. Detail of Fig. 120.



125. Constantine and Angel. Detail of Fig. 120.





126. Building of church. Detail of Fig. 120.



127. First Council of Nicaea. Detail of Fig. 120.



129. Constantine lying in state. Detail of Fig. 120.



128. Helena lying in state. Detail of Fig. 120.



130. Darius. Detail from the Alexander mosaic. Archaeol. Museum.



131. Member of Darius' retinue. Detail of Fig. 130.



132. Shapur II hunting. Silver plate. Freer Gallery of Art, Washington.



133. Members of Justinian's retinue. San Vitale, Ravenna.

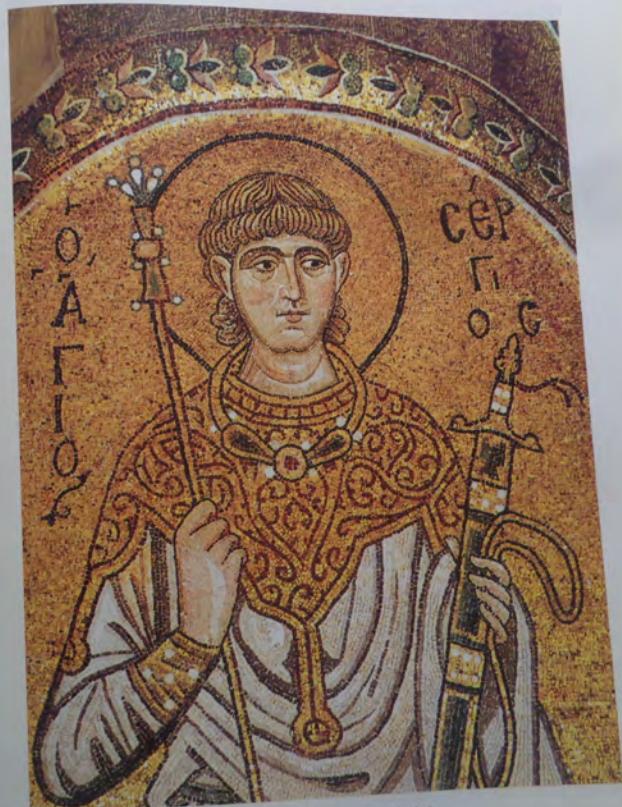




134. Judgement of Pilate, Rossano Gospels, detail.



135. Icon of Saints Sergius and Basilissa, Kiev.



136. Saint Sergius. Mosaic. Daphni.





137. Saint Bacchus. Mosaic. Daphnet.



138. Saints Sergius and Bacchus. Icon. St. Catherine Monastery, Mount Sinai.



139. Saint Procopius. Icon. St. Catherine Monastery, Mount Sinai.



140. Cross with IC XC NI KA. Harbaville triptych, Louvre.



141. Sts. Martin, Lucian and Julian. Musée national du Moyen Âge, Paris.





142. Saint Paul Kephalphoros in host of Saints. Panagia, Krina, Chios.



143. Gedeon receives the heads of Oreb and Zeeb. *Minuscule*, Vatopedi 602, f. 480v.



145. Saint George Kephalphoros. Icon by Jovan Mangafi, Busovaca, Bosnia.



144. Biographical icon of Saint George, 1574 A.D. Cajnice, Bosnia.





146. Saint George holding his head, Saint Theodore Teron, Saint Theodore Stratelates holding his head and Saint Demetrios. Icon by Michael Damaskinos (ca 1535-1592), Benaki Museum, Athens.



147. Saint George "kephalophoros" trampling dragon, Arkadi Museum, Rethymnon, Crete.



148. Saint George Kephalophoros. Icon, Cretan workshop, ca 1600 A.D. Benaki Museum, Athens.



149. St. George Kephalophoros. Icon by the Cretan G. Blastos, 1642-44 A.D. Benaki Museum, Athens.





150. Saint George Kephalophoros. Icon (Southern Italy or Dukrovnik?). Byzantine Museum, Athens.



151. St. George Kephalophoros. Icon. Historical Museum, Moscow.



152. St. George Kephalophoros. Icon. Pushkin Museum, Moscow.





154. Sts. Zosimos and Nicholas. Icon in St. Catherine Monastery, Sinai.



153. Saint Zosimos of Sozopol. Icon by Demetrius of Sozopol. Sozopol.



155. Personification of Constantinople and statue of Constantine, Tabula Peutingeriana, Austrian National Library, Vienna.



157. Constantine the Great, Constantinople 326 A.D. Cabinet des Médailles, Paris.



159. Cameo with bust of Constantine, Cabinet des Médailles, Paris.



156. Glory of Constantine, Sicily, 326 A.D. Reverse of the medallion of Fig. 8. British Museum, London.



158. Putti holding garland of flowers. Reverse of the coin of Fig. 157.



160. Constantine, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome, Reconstruction.



161. Colossal Head of Constantine, Side view, Marble, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome.



162. Colossal Head of Constantine from Rome, Marble, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



163. Colossal Head of Constantine, Side view, Bronze, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome.



164. Colossal Head of Constantine, Frontal view, Bronze, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome.



165. Head of Constantine from Nîmes, Frontal view, Bronze, National Museum, Belgrade.



166. Head of Constantine from Nîmes, Side view, Bronze, National Museum, Belgrade.



167. The Arch of Constantine, S. side, Rome, 315 A.D.



168. The Arch of Constantine, N. side, Rome, 315 A.D.





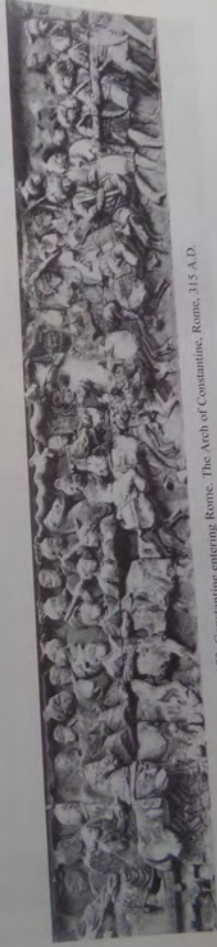
169. Constantine Leaving Milan. The Arch of Constantine, Rome, 315 A.D.



170. The Siege of Verona. The Arch of Constantine, Rome, 315 A.D.



171. The Battle of the Milvian Bridge. The Arch of Constantine, Rome, 315 A.D.



172. Constantine entering Rome. The Arch of Constantine, Rome, 315 A.D.



173. Adlocutio of Constantine. The Arch of Constantine, Rome, 315 A.D.



174. Liberalitas of Constantine. The Arch of Constantine, Rome, 315 A.D.



175. Sacrifice to Apollo, tondo with nimbed Constantine. Arch of Constantine, Rome.



176. Lion Hunt, tondo with nimbed Constantine. The Arch of Constantine, Rome.



177. Nimbed head of Constantine from the Boar Hunt, detail from Fig. 178. The Arch of Constantine.



178. Boar Hunt, window with nimbed Constantine on horseback. The Arch of Constantine, Rome.

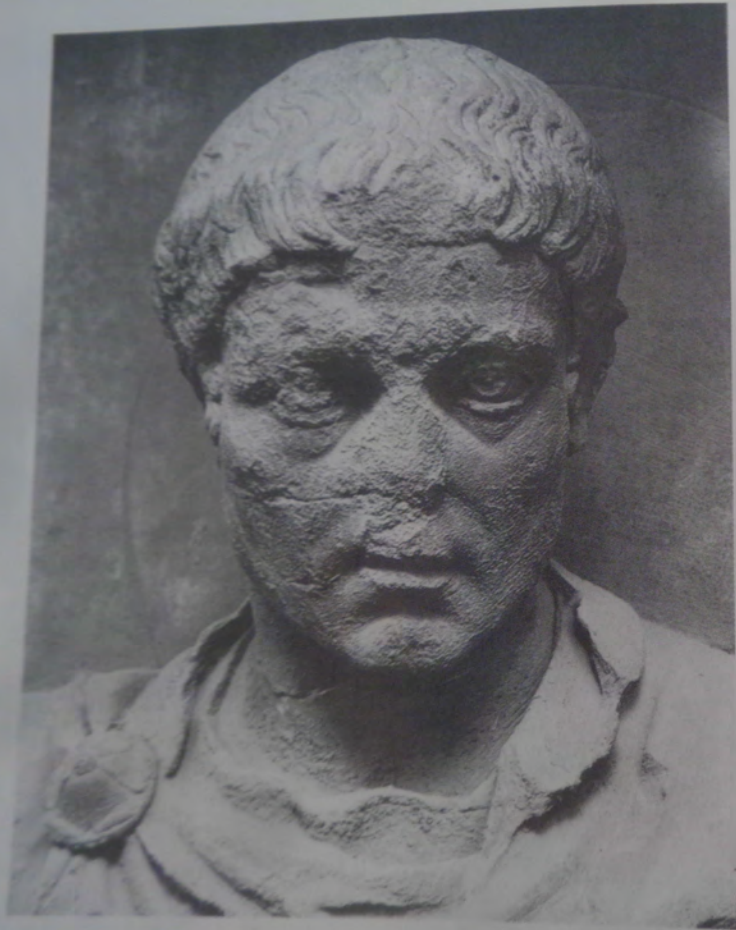


179. Sarcophagus of Helena, Vatican Museums.



180. Sarcophagus with New and Old Testament scenes. Musée Réattu, Arles.





177. *Nimbed head of Constantine from the Boar Hunt, detail from Fig. 178. The Arch of Constantine.*



181. Sarcophagus with New and Old Testament scenes, Musée Réattu, Arles.



182. Reconstruction of the Constantinian mosaic under the Cathedral of Trier, drawing.



183. Copper medallion with Helena Augusta  
British Museum, London.



184. Pietas. Reverse of Fig. 183.  
British Museum, London.



185. Securitas. Reverse of Fig. 20 showing Helena.  
Cabinet des Médailles, Paris.



186. Fausta as Salus. Reverse of Fig. 21.  
Private collection.



187. Pietas Augustae. Reverse of a portrait of Fausta.  
British Museum, London.



188. Constantine on horseback. Statuette.  
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.



181. Sarcophagus with New and Old Testament scenes. Musée Réattu, Arles.



182. Reconstruction of the Constantinian mosaic under the Cathedral of Trier, drawing.



183. Copper medallion with Helena Augusta. British Museum, London.



184. Pietas. Reverse of Fig. 183. British Museum, London.



185. Securitas. Reverse of Fig. 20 showing Helena. Cabinet des Médailles, Paris.



186. Fausta as Salus. Reverse of Fig. 21. Private collection.



187. Pietas Augustae. Reverse of a portrait of Fausta. British Museum, London.



188. Constantine on horseback. Statuette. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.





189. Constantine with a horse. Silver medallion.  
Staatliche Münzsammlung, Munich.



190. Adlocutio. Reverse of Fig. 189.  
Staatliche Münzsammlung, Munich.



191. Constantine as Sol, Trier 313-315 A.D.  
British Museum, London.



192. The City of Trier. Reverse of Fig. 191.  
British Museum, London.



193. Constantine as Sol, Thessaloniki ca. 317.  
Private Collection.



194. Securitas reipublicae, Reverse of Fig. 193.  
Private Collection.



195. Argenteus of Maximinus, Trier 309-13.  
British Museum, London.



196. Sol Invictus.  
Reverse of Fig. 195.



197. Constantine as Sol, Antioch ca. 326.  
Private collection.



198. Constantine I, Trier 297 A.D.  
Obverse of Fig. 28



199. Divus Constantine, Constantinople 337/341  
Cabinet des Médailles, Paris.



200. Apotheosis of Constantine.  
Reverse of Fig. 199.



190. Adlocutio. Rverse of Fig. 189.  
Staatliche Münzsammlung, Munich.



201. Constantine Caesar, Constantinople, 324 A.D. Obverse of Fig. 31.  
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.



202. *Stemma* with Constantine,  
Constantinople, ca. 327 A.D. Obverse  
of Fig. 28. British Museum, London.



203. Scales with pan and statuette of Constantine as  
movable weight, Staatliche Museen, Berlin.



205. The Emperor Phocas, Counterpoise weight, British Museum, London



204. Constantine the Great. Counterpoise weight, Princeton.





201. Constantius Caesar, Constantinople, 324 A.D. Obverse of Fig. 31.  
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.



206. Counterpoise weight in the form of an empress. Benaki Museum, Athens.



207. Counterpoise weight in the form of an empress. British Museum, London.



208. Counterpoise weight in the form of an empress. Collection George Ortiz, Geneva.



209. Counterpoise weight in the form of an empress. Louvre, Paris.



210. Cross with Constantine and Helena (?).  
Coffer from Labkovo, Bulgaria.



211. Cross with Constantine and Helena (?).  
Coffer from Isauria, Bulgaria.



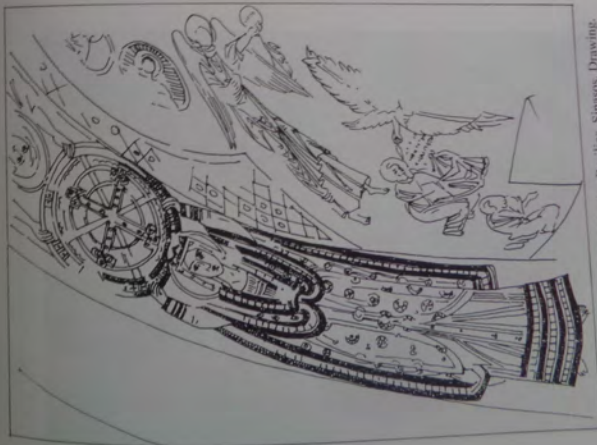
212. Cross, MS. Par. graec. 510, f. C. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



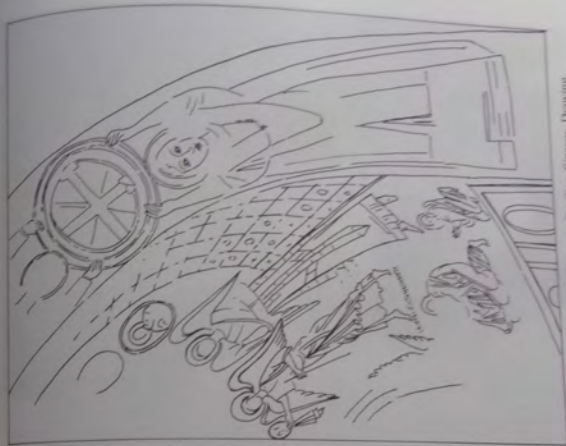
213. The Sign of Constantine. Painting, Hagios Basilios, Sinasos.



214. The Sign of Constantine. Painting, Hagios Basilios, Sinasos. Drawing of Fig. 213.

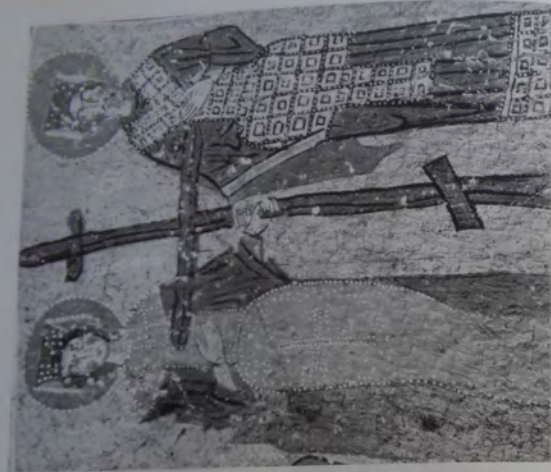


215. St. Constantine. Painting, Hagios Basilios, Sinasos. Drawing.



216. St. Helena. Painting, Hagios Basilios, Sinasos. Drawing.





218. Constantine and Helena, Yılanlı kilise, Göreme 28.



217. Constantine and Helena holding reliquary with Cross. Painting, Kuskuk Cavusin.



219. Emperor Nicephorus Phocas flanked by his father, the Caesar Bardas Phocas, his brother, the Couropalates Leon, the empress Theophano and unidentified woman. Painting, Pigeon House, Cavusin.



220. Drawing of Fig. 219



221-222. Saints Constantine and Helena, Saklı Kilise, Gürene 2a.



223. Biographical cycle of Gregory of Nazianzus, Par. gr. 510, f. 45<sup>v</sup>



224. Biographical cycle of St. Basil, Par. gracs. 510, f. 104.



225. Biographical cycle of St. Cyprian, Par. gracs. 510, f. 332<sup>v</sup>.





226. The Vision of Habakkuk with Helena, Par. graec. 510, f. 285v.



227. Adoration of Christ by Constantine and Helena. Miniature. Verrelli cod. CLXV, f. 5.



228. The First Council of Nicaea with Constantine presiding. Saints Peter and Paul. Miniature. Verrelli cod. CLXV, f. 28.



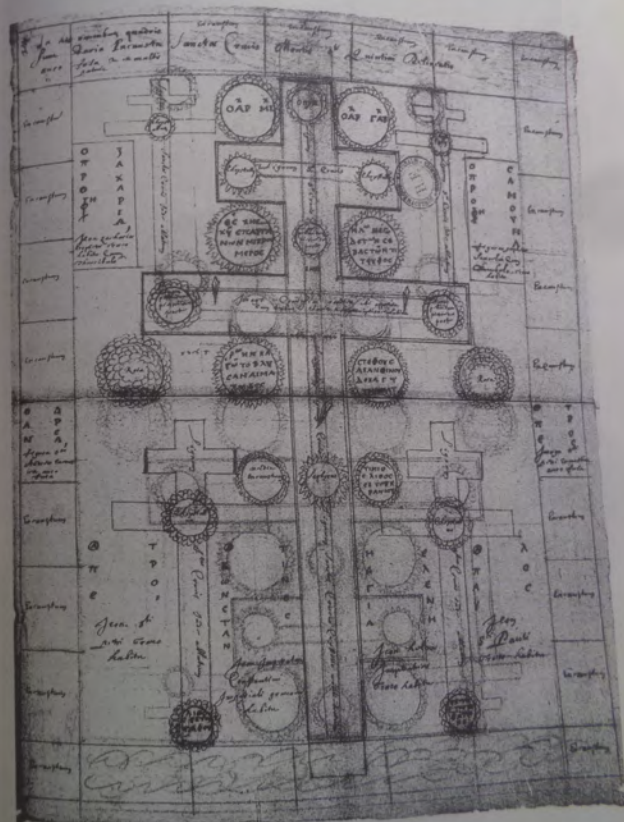




230. St. Constantine, Theodore Pallier, London Add. 19375, f. 60v.



229. St. Constantine, Barberini Palimpsest, Vat. Graec. 372, f. 110.



231. Lost reliquary of Timothy the Monk with Constantine and Helena. Drawing. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, cod. lat. 12692, f. 313v-314.



232. Reliquary with Constantine and Helena. Ivory panel. Church of San Francesco, Cortona.



233. The Avellano Reliquary, Urbino.



234. Reliquary, Old Cathedral, Brescia.



235. Lost reliquary from the Ste. Chapelle, Silver? After Morand's engraving (1780).



236. Jaucourt reliquary with Constantine and Helena. Silver gilt. Louvre.



237. Crusader reliquary, Constantine and Helena. Silver gilt. Louvre.

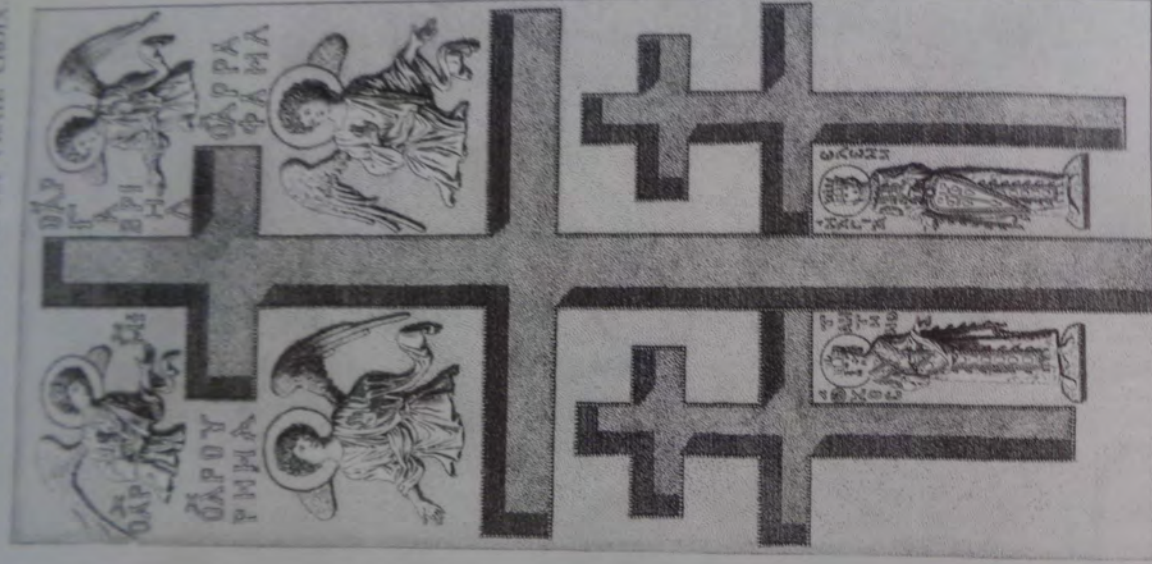




Reliquary, Urbino.



Cathedral. Brescia.



*Après et d'après par H. Rouvenot de 1842. D. H. Rouvenot.*

235. Lost reliquary from the Ste. Chapelle. Silver? After Morand's engraving (1790). Louvre.



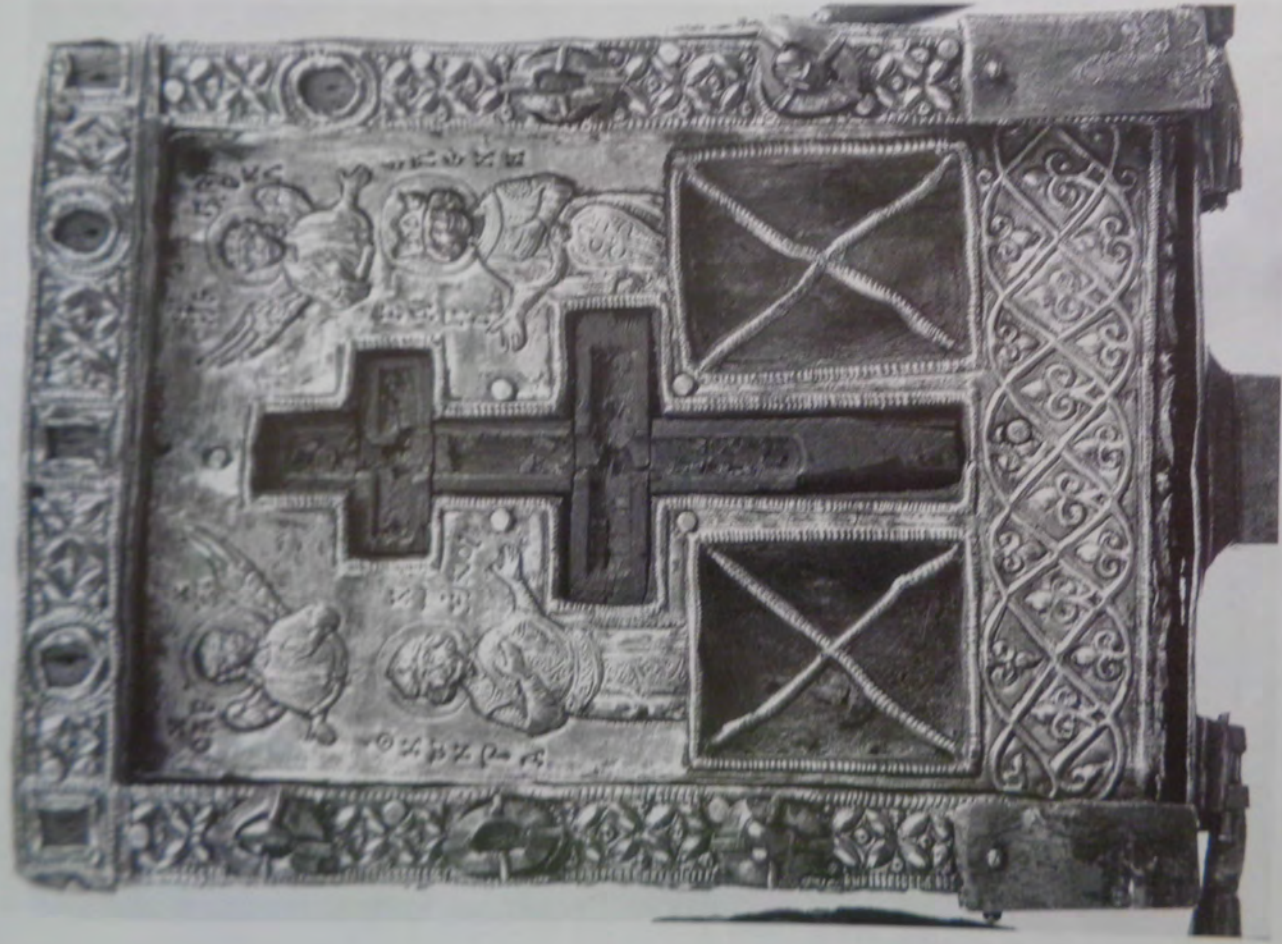


232. Reliquary with Constantine and Helena. Ivory panel. Church of San Francesco, Cortona.



237. Crusader reliquary, Constantine and Helena. Silver gilt. Louvre.



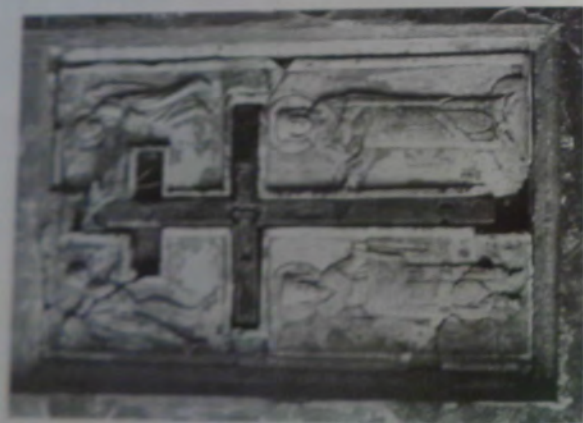


236. Jaucourt reliquary with Constantine and Helena. Silver gilt. Louvre.





239-240. Constantine and Helena. The Cross of Adrianople, back side of fig. 65. Benaki Museum, Athens.

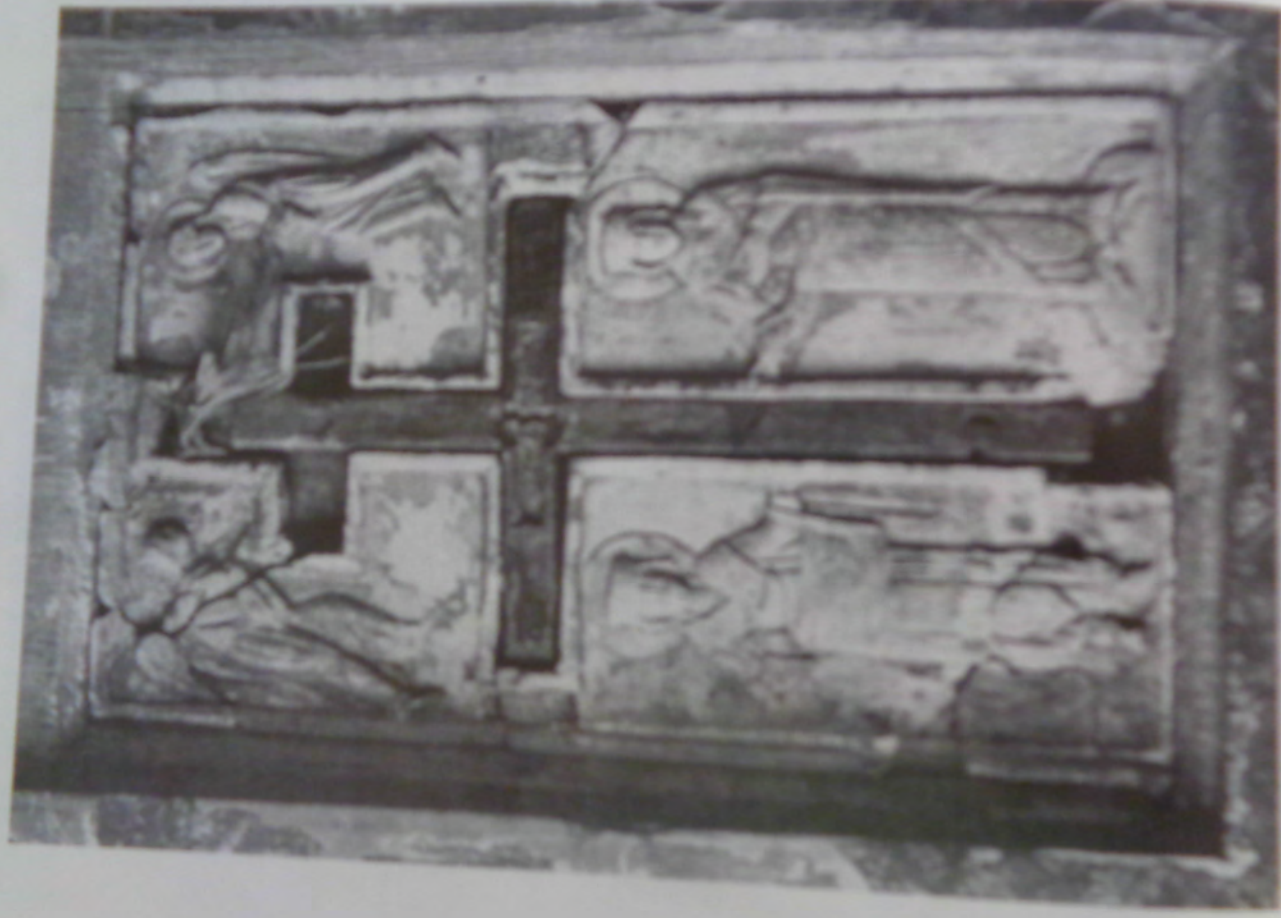


238. Leminia reliquary, Sicily, Archbishop's palace, Syracuse.

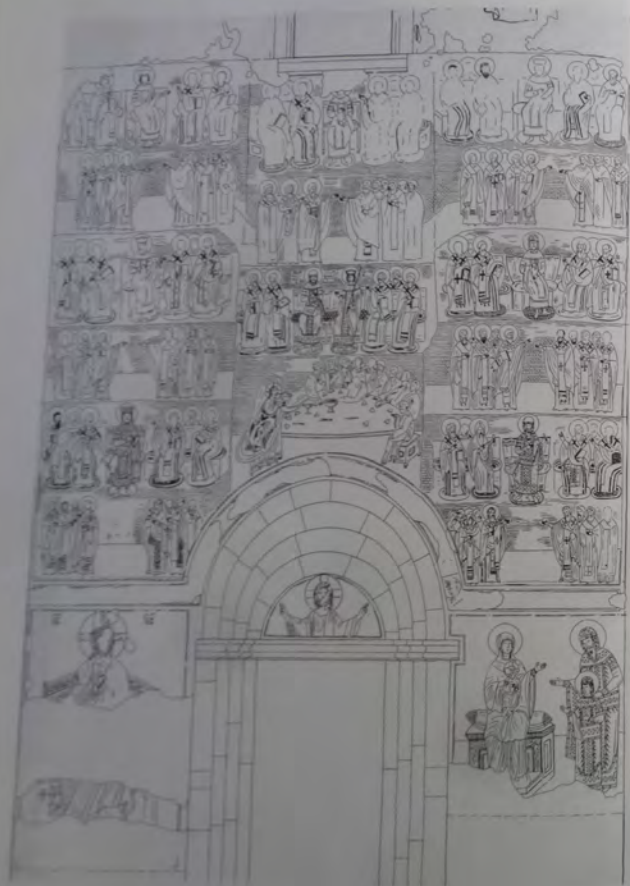


241. Ivory triptych with Crucifixion and saints, Cabinet des médailles, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

242. Constantine and Helena, detail of Fig. 241.



236. 12th-century relief carving. St. Simeon, Archbishop's palace, Syracuse.



243. Eight councils, Monastery of the Trinity, Sopocani, eso-narthex.



244. First Council of Nicaea with Constantine presiding. Painting. Athos, the Great Lavra, Refectory.



245. The First Council of Nicaea. Painting. Monastery of the Dormition, Elšnicki, near Sofia.





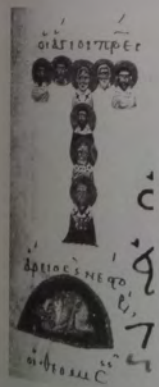
246. The First Council of Nicaea with Constantine presiding. Painting, St. Sozomenus, Galata, Cyprus.



247. Emperor Constantine and Empress Helena presiding the First Council of Nicaea. Suzevita.



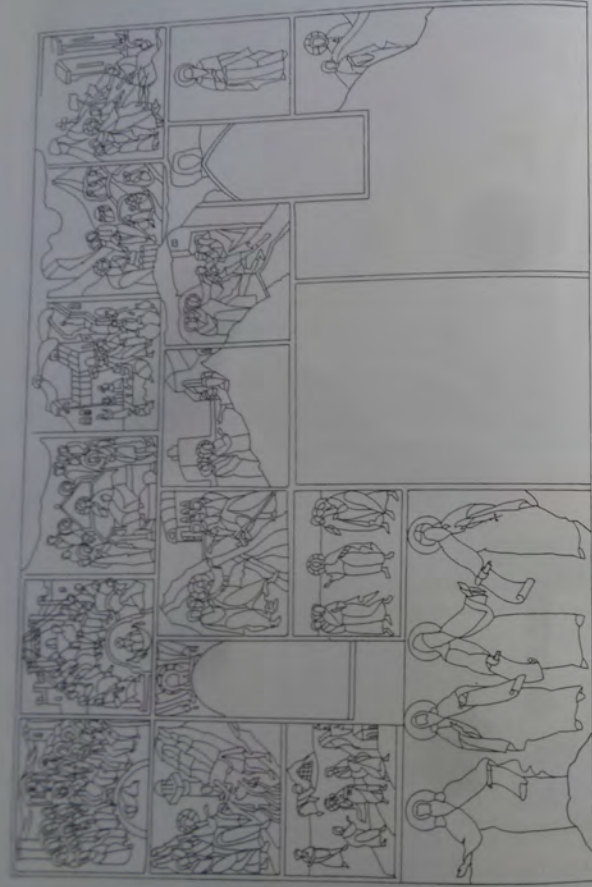
248. The First Council of Nicaea with Constantine holding a scroll. Painting, Arbanasi, Bulgaria.



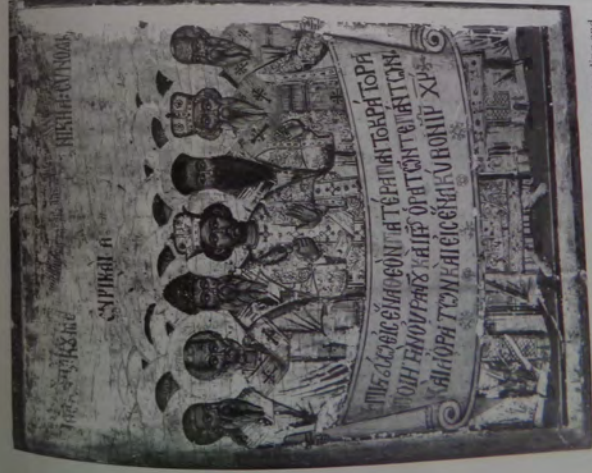
249. The Holy Fathers with Arius and Nestorius, Morgan 639,



250. Sixth Ecumenical Council, Lectionary, Vatican græc. 1156, f. 253.



251. Liturgical Calendar with Council of Nicaea (upper left picture). Painting. Monastery of the Nativity of the Virgin, Rozan near Melnik.

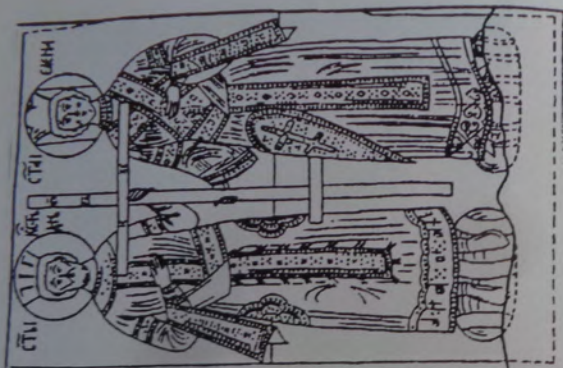


252. First Council of Nicaea. Constantine and bishops standing and holding a scroll. Proskynesis icon, Private collection, Athens.

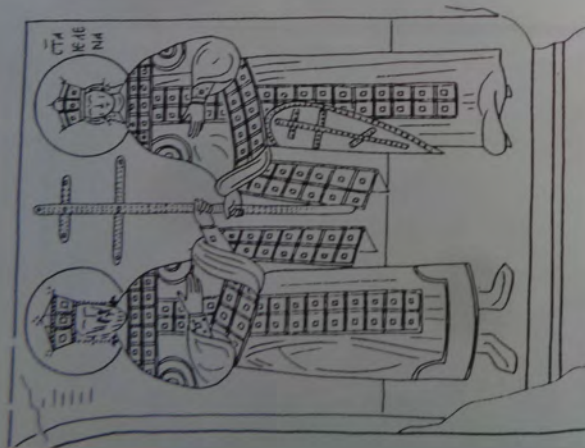


253. First Council of Nicaea. Constantine and bishops standing and holding a scroll. Proskynesis icon, Athens, Ivorra.





255. Constantine and Helena. Painting. Kalemec.



254. Constantine and Helena. Painting. Zica.



256. Sts. Peter and Paul, Constantine and Helena, and John Chrysostom. Anije.



257. Despot Stefan Uroš Nemanja as donor and Simonida. Painting. Kraljeva crkva. Studenica. Drawing of Fig. 94.





258. Constantine and Helena. Painting. Mali Sveti Braci, Ohrid.



260. Constantine and Helena. Old church of Saint Clement, Ohrid.



259. Saint Clement presents a model of the city to Saints Cosmas and Damian. Painting. Mali Sveti Braci, Ohrid.



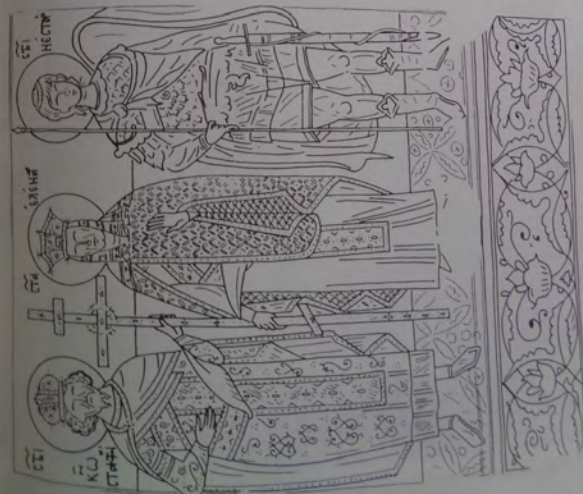
261. Old church of Saint Clement, Ohrid. W. wall, drawing.



262. Constantine and Helena; Painting. Donja Kamenica. Drawing.



263. Constantine and Helena. Painting. Monastery of Buckovo.



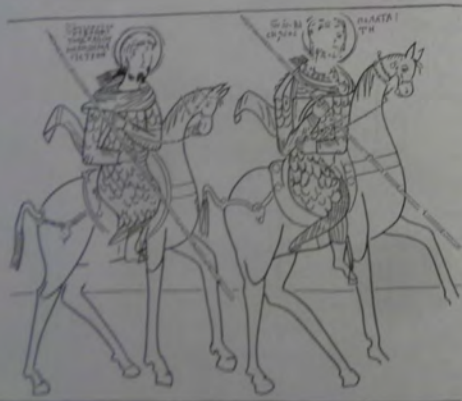
264. Constantine and Helena with Nestor. Painting. Poganovo. Drawing.



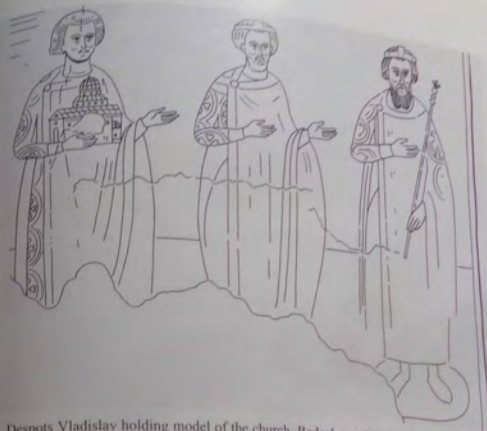
265. Donko Michael and his spouse. Painting. Donja Kamenica. Drawing.



266. John Tzimiskes followed by Magister Melias. Painting, Pigeon House, Cavusin.



267. John Tzimiskes followed by Magister Melias, Pigeon House, Cavusin. Drawing of Fig. 266.



268. Despots Vladislav holding model of the church, Radoslav and Stephen I. Painting, Mileeva.

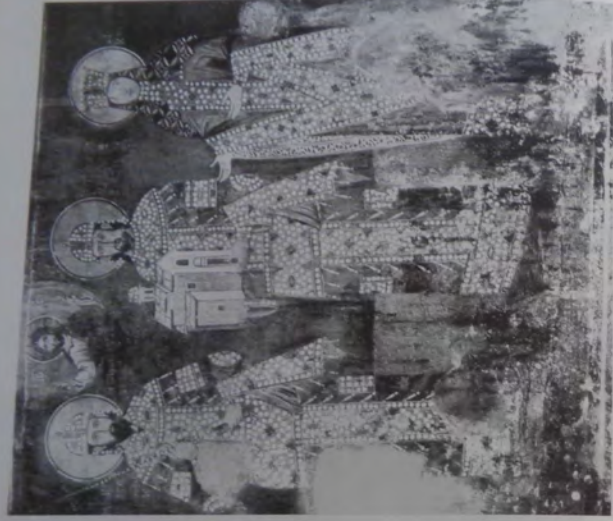


269. Coronation by Angels of the despot Stefan Lazarevic. Painting, Ljubostinja.





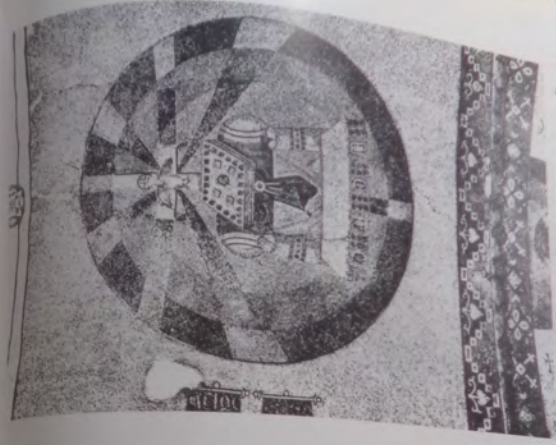
270. Constantine and Helena, Painting, Mileleva.



271. Dragutin, Milutin and his wife, Anije.



272. Exaltation of the Cross, Theodore Psalter, London Add. 19352, f. 131v.



273. Heremias, Missae, Dormition, Newar (now destroyed).



274. The Exaltation of the Cross.  
Miniature, Vatican gr. 1156, f. 250v.



275. Despot Stefan Radoslav and Constantine holding  
cross. Coin, National Museum, Belgrade.



276. Martyrdom of St. James. Miniature, Vatican graec. 1613, p. 131.



277. The Dying Gall, marble statue, Museo Capitolino, Rome.



279. Bahram Gur hunting, Sasanian plate, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



278. Statuette of god, Saint-Germain-en-Laye.





280. Arch of Septimius Severus with strator, Lepcis Magna, detail.



281. Ivory Coffer with Portraits of Sts. Sergius and Bacchus. Bargello, Florence.



283. Missorium of Theodosius I. Real Academia de la Historia, Madrid.

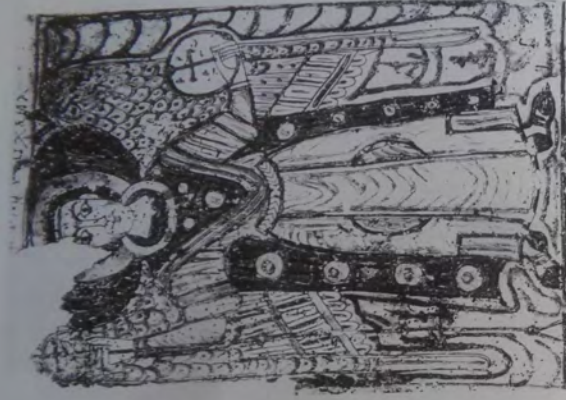


282. Two guards. Detail of Fig. 283.





284. Book cover with Consular diptych, State Library, Munich.



285. Archangel Michael, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.



286. Saint Menas, Manchester, Ryland's Library, Coptic 33.



287. Saint Theodore Orientalis, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.



288. Votive Portrait of St. Sergius. St. Demetrius, Thessaloniki.



289. St. Bacchus. Sts. Sergius and Bacchus, Kouta, Mani.



290. Sts. Sergius and Bacchus, Trebizond.



291. Tzitzirehis, Kastoria.



292. Cross, Akören, 525 A.D.



293. Stamp with IC XC NI KA.



294. Cross with IC XC. Painting, Zelve, church n° 4. Drawing of Fig. 295.





295. Cross with IC XC. Painting, Zelve, church n° 4.



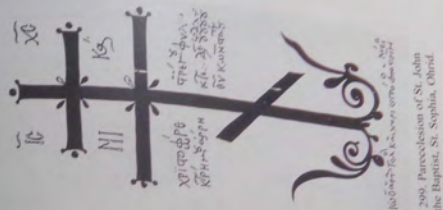
296. IC XC NI KA and a descan. Painting, Zelve, church n° 4, south-western chapel.



297. Athens, National Library, Codex 108, f. IV.

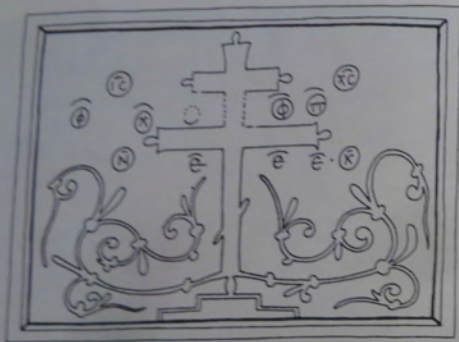


298. Saints Constantine and Helena, Ohrid.



299. Paraclection of St. John the Baptist, St. Sophia, Ohrid.





300. Sopocani.



301. Gracаница.



302. Inscribed stone at Karizali, Bulgaria.



304. Saint Stephen, Yilanti kilise, Cappadocia.



303. St. Stephen in centre of Cross, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters, New York.



305. Saint George. Schlumberger Cross.



306. St Alban, Stuttgart Landeshandbibliothek, Codex Hist. fol. 57, f. 101.



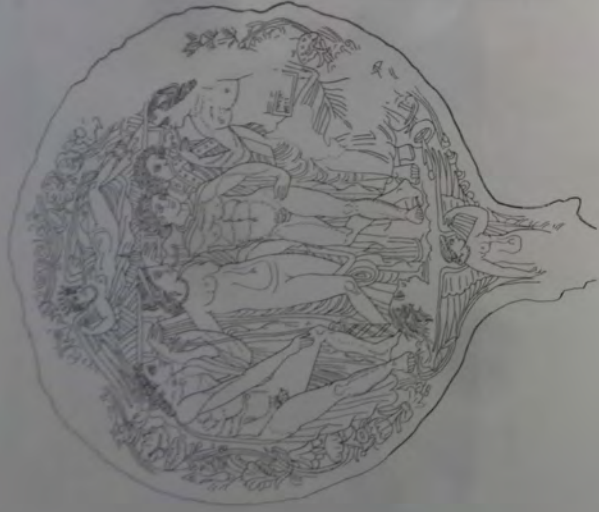
307. Achilles throwing the head of Troilus. Hydria from Vulci, B.M. n° 326.



307b. Perseus presents Athena with the Gorgon's head for her shield, Crater at Gods.

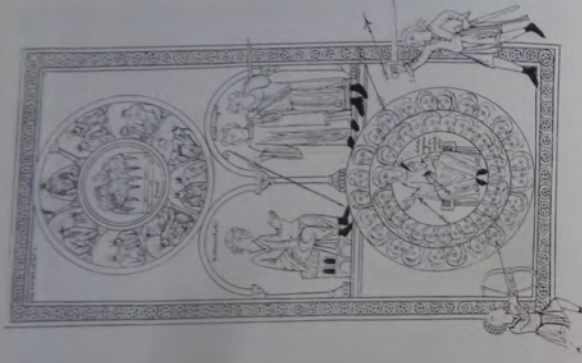


307a. Petrification of Polydectes, Bell crater, Museo Civico, Bologna.



308. Etruscan mirror with the head of Orpheus.

309. Decapitated saints. Stuttgart Landesbibliothek, fol. 415, f. 68v.



310. Soldiers carrying heads of dead Dacians. Colonna Traiana, Rome.





311. Decapitation of Quadri rebels, Colonna Antonina, Rome.



312. Saint Denis and Charlemagne. Painting, Louvre, Paris.



313. Saint George "typhalophoros", 1345, Cathedral of Xenodochia.



314. Saint George "kephalophoros", icon by Antonios, 1552, Chapel of St. George, Saint Paul's, Athos.



315. Dolmen with half-portraits of saints (Blastos?), Sale at Sothebys, London.



316. Copper-plate engraving (block dated 1701), Serbian church, Pest.





318. St. George "kephalophoros" and St. Demetrius, Icon, Zografou, Athos.

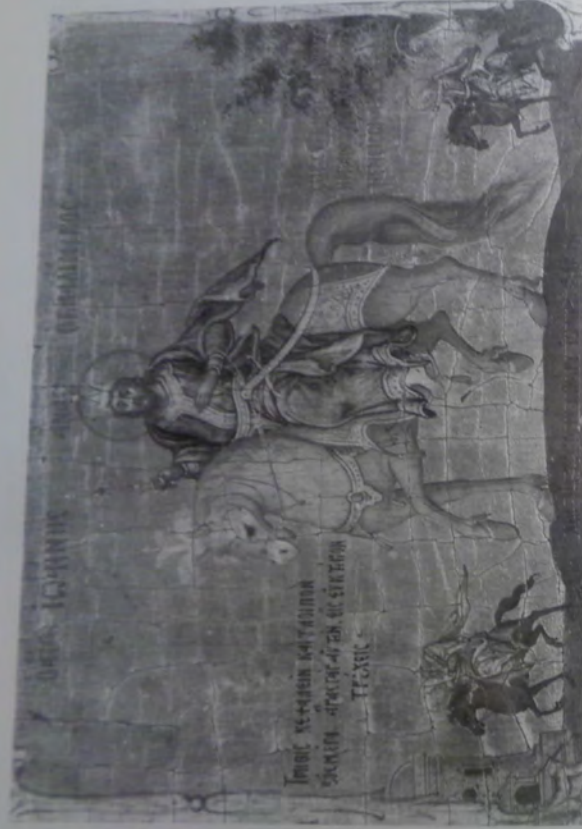


317. St. George "kephalophoros", Icon (ca 1600), Canellopoulos Museum.



319. Sinai Monastery (above) and Saint John Vladimir, Icon by John Cornaros of Crete, 1781 A.D., Mount Sinai, Monastery of Saint Catherine.





320. Saint John Vladimir. Detail of Fig. 319, Icon by John Komaros of Crete, 1781 A.D., Mount Sinai, Monastery of Saint Catherine.



321. Saint John Vladimir "Kephalaophoros" riding to shrine. Detail of Fig. 320.



322. Donors' inscription. Detail of Fig. 147, St. George, Achadi, Crete.



323. John Vladimir, biographical engraving after Zefarovic.



324. John Vladimir lying in state. Biographical engraving, detail of Fig. 323.



325. John Vladimir lying in state, engraving by Isabella Piccini, Acolouthia, Venice 1690.









330. John Vladimir, book cover XVIIIth century.



329. Salome and the head of John the Baptist, Prizren Gospels.



331. John Vladimir lying in state, detail of Fig. 176.



332. Prince Lazar "kepalophoros", Serbian engraving.